

Catholic Bible Stories



Catholic Bible Stories

from the
Old and New Testaments

By
Josephine Van Dyke Brownson
Author of "To the Heart of the Child"

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PREFACE

There are people who love to look upon a landscape, but love better its pictured reproduction on canvas; which does not mean that they admire the counterfeit rather than the original; but that, fully appreciating the fact that the original is a Divine Masterpiece, and therefore beyond the skill and powers of human artistry, they love the original through their interest in what best shows its beauties to the wider admiration and for the greater pleasure of men.

There are people who love the trees and the grass and the flowers growing in wild profusion, but who love better to see them trained and grouped and graded through artistic labor, not because a gardener improves on nature, but rather because his skill sets off and makes more enjoyable the beauties that only nature can produce.

So there are people who love the Great Book of inspired and divine artistry, who yet prefer to read it in the simple form of the reproduction of its greatest and most interesting passages, and to catch ordered glimpses of its beauties so arranged as to win for them new lovers by awakening new loves.

Many a man and woman learned the more fully to appreciate the glory of the sunset that he or she had seen over and over again without a thought of the marvel of it, by once seeing it with heeding eyes in the counterfeit presentation of the painter's brush. Many a man and woman learned to love roses by first seeing a rosebush standing alone on the carpet of a green lawn, and set

off by the darker background of semi-distant beds of rhododendron.

The author of this little book of Bible Stories knew these things; and, because she knew them, and because she loved the divine handiwork of the Book of books, she set out to make her garden—which in its own way is also a picture—that many, who might never have awakened to the miracle of beauty in this literature of Heaven, might open the gates of their eyes to it and let it make triumphant entrance into their hearts.

And because gardens are the delight of children, even as children are always an added delight to gardens, the author has arranged her selections—transplanted from the luxuriant forest and plains of that poetry which is prophecy, and that prophecy which is the aurora of the Light of the World—so that children may be attracted to play amongst them, and thus to know and to love them, and through this knowledge and love to know and love the Great God, whose gardens are the uncounted planets.

It is not wise then to say that we are too wise for the reading of this little book. Bossuet says: "Unhappy is the knowledge that does not turn into love." It is better then to pray that we may be as wise and happy as the many children who have already learned to love it; for if it is prepared for children, it is prepared for us all; and if it is good for children, it has a double message for us who must become "even as children," if we are to wander some day in the Eternal Garden of our Father's house of many mansions.

Rt. Rev. Francis C. Kelley.

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Catholic Bible Stories

CHAPTER I

WHERE THE WORLD CAME FROM

Make yourselves comfortable, for we are going on a long journey. We are going back thousands of years, before the first man had been made; farther still, before the first animal had been made. The earth was then covered with forests. Not a bird twittered, not a fly buzzed. There was no noise but the noise of thunder and rushing water, the noise of wind and tumbling rocks. Farther still, when not a tree, not a bush, not a blade of grass had started. Farther still, before the earth or the moon or the sun or the stars or anything else had been made. There was not even any air. There was not even anything to make things out of. Then how did the sun and the moon and the earth ever get here?

Joe looks hungry. Suppose that when he goes home he sits on the floor in front of the oven and waits for a nice chocolate cake to come out. You

tell him not to waste his time, for the oven is empty. But Joe says he does not care, he is going to wait anyway until the cake comes. How long do you think he will have to wait for a cake to come out of the oven, unless some one puts a cake in the oven? So, too, when would the earth have got here if no one had put it here? Never. But the earth is here for you and I are on it, so some one must have made it and made it out of nothing too.

Who is powerful enough to make something out of nothing? Who is great enough to make this big earth? Who could make this earth without anything to stand on? The wonderful Being who did all this we call GOD. He is the only one who can make things out of nothing. He made the sun and moon and earth and stars and all things. He has only to wish for a thing to be and it is. There is nothing He can not do.

God needs nothing to stand on, for He has no body. He is a spirit. He is everywhere at the same time. He sees us every moment of the day and night. He sees everything we do and we cannot hide from Him, not even if we could bury ourselves in the middle of the earth.



And God said: "Be light made." And light was made. (Gen. 1:3.)

No one made God. He was never born. He never started. He always lived and will live forever. He will never die. He made you and me, and best of all, He loves you and me more than our own mother does. He is always thinking about us and waiting for the day when He will take us to Heaven where He will give us everything we want.

Every time we do anything wrong, it hurts Him very much, and if we could see how kindly He is looking at us, we would never do anything to make Him feel bad.

He is right here with us now and always and yet we can not see Him because He has no body; but in Heaven we shall see Him face to face, for then we shall be able to see spirits.

There is only one God, but He is three persons. The first person is the Father, the second person is the Son, the third person is the Holy Spirit or Holy Ghost.

The Father is the whole of God, the Son is the whole of God, the Holy Ghost is the whole of God. Each person is a different person from the others, but each person is the same God as the others. We cannot understand how one God

is three persons, or how the three persons are the same God and so we call it a mystery. The mystery of the Blessed Trinity means one God in three divine persons.

Once two little boys were playing. Their names were Arthur and James. Arthur was coaxing James to do something wrong, and James was just going to give in when he looked up and saw his mother watching from the window. Then he whispered: "I can't, Arthur. My mother is looking at me."

So, too, when any one coaxes you to do anything wrong, look up a moment and say to yourself: "I can't. God is looking at me."

CHAPTER II

THE FIRST MESSENGERS

The first thing God created was an immense army of spirits. At His wish they stood before Him, row after row, great, strong and beautiful. Their number was like the number of stars in the sky, or of grains of sand on the seashore. And God looked at them and loved them, and they were burning with love for Him, and were ready to obey His slightest wish. He called them His messengers or *angels*. St. Michael was one and Lucifer another.

The angels were very happy, but God did not let them see Him, although they were longing to do so. He wished first to try their love. Many persons think the test was this: God told them that some day after the world was made, He was going down on the earth to be born a little baby and to grow up to be a man. At once Lucifer and a large number of angels cried out that if God was going to do that they would refuse to serve Him, for they were too great and too beautiful to have a little baby for their God.

Like a flash of light, St. Michael drew his



And there was a great battle in Heaven, Michael and his angels fought with the dragon, and the dragon fought and his angels. (Apoc. 12:7.)

sword and leaped to the side of God, and with him rushed two-thirds of that great army of angels, whilst like thunder arose their battle-shout: "Who is like unto God? If God becomes a little baby, He will be God just the same and we will always obey and love Him, for whatever He does is right."

The battle was on. Sword clashed against sword, and in an instant St. Michael and his warriors hurled Lucifer and the bad angels headlong over the battlements of Heaven into the great hole of hell their sin had just made.

Oh, how they shrieked with pain as they fell into the terrible flames. How they threw themselves against the strong gates of hell and cried to be let out. And they are still shrieking with pain and still crying to be let out, but they shall remain there in agony forever and forever. All their beauty was gone and they were turned into hideous devils, cursing God and wishing that they had never been created.

Then St. Michael and all the other good angels stood before their Creator and, as their reward, God let them see Him face to face and they have been filled with joy ever since.

The angels have no body, but they have often put on the shape of a body so that people could see them when they have come on some errand.

Each of you has at his side one of those great angels that fought for God before the world was made. And he isn't an old angel either for spirits do not grow old. He is strong and beautiful and never leaves you for an instant, day or night. He has been with you ever since you were born, for then God placed you in his care so that he might look after you and keep you from sin. His work will not be over until, when you die, he carries your soul back to God.

Often speak to your angel and ask him to keep you pure. He can do many things for you. He fought the devil in the great battle in Heaven and he will fight him again when he comes around you.

How we should love our guardian angel if only we could see his beauty, could see the light streaming from him, could see how powerful and pure he is.

Often, as you walk along the street, put your hand in his and ask him to cover you with his wings so that no sin can touch you.

CHAPTER III

WHAT KEEPS US ALIVE

After God had created the earth, He made the trees and the flowers, the fruits and the vegetables. Only God could have done this, for all the men in the world can not make so much as a blade of grass. And they have really tried and are still trying to make any kind of plant that will grow and they can not do it.

How many of you have ever picked dandelions? And when the dandelions have grown old and gray, have you ever tried to blow away their white, silky hair? Do you know what the dandelion's white hair really is? Each little silky tuft carries at its base a tiny seed; it is the umbrella to which the seed clings so that the wind can give it a ride. And after the seed has made its first trip through the air, it lies down and goes to sleep in the soft earth. When its nap is over, it wakes up, stretches itself, pushes its legs down into the soil, thrusts its head up into the air and soon it is a full-grown plant with leaves and buds and flowers.

God made the dandelion and made it so its flowers would change into seeds and the seeds into other dandelions. God has given men wonderful brains and they can make marvellous machinery, aeroplanes and submarines, but He has not given them the power to make the smallest plant, and all the men in the world can not make a tiny dandelion seed.

God next made the animals—the fishes and birds, the lions and elephants and camels and bears and horses and cows and dogs and rabbits and all the others.

Last of all God made the first man and woman. He made them with bodies like the animals, but He put in their bodies something the animals have not got—a soul. You and I are their children and like them we have a body and a soul.

The soul is a spirit and can never die. We can not see our soul, but when it leaves our body, our body dies. When a car gets off its trolley, it can no longer move and we say it is dead. We can not see the electricity that makes a live car go, neither can we see the soul that gives us life. If a dead car gets back on its trolley, it is alive again. So, too, when the end of the world comes,

every one's soul will go back to its body and the dead body will come alive again and the soul will never leave it more.

Our soul is worth ever so much more than our body, and so we should give it much better care than we give our body. What do we do for our body every day? What do we do for our soul every day?

You see our body will die anyway, no matter how kindly we treat it; but if we take good care of our soul, we shall live with God forever in Heaven; whereas, if we do not take care of it, we shall burn forever in terrible fire in the awful torments of hell.

Let us start now to care for our soul. Let us learn today to make the sign of the cross. Let us make the sign of the cross the first thing in the morning, the last thing at night and many times during the day. If on the street we do not like to make a large sign of the cross, we can make a small one over our heart.

Once there were two little girls named Mary and Lucy. Their father was very, very rich, and he gave them each a pretty little silver locket and inside of each locket was a costly pearl. He

told them that they must take very good care of the lockets on account of the pearls and that when they were twenty-one years old, they might open the lockets and see the pearls.

After a while Lucy grew tired of taking care of her locket and began to think that the pearl might not be worth very much, anyway. Besides, she had to wait so many years before she could see it. Then one day she threw it aside thoughtlessly.

But Mary knew that her father meant every word he had said, and year after year she guarded her locket with the greatest care. At last she was twenty-one years old and all the family stood about her as her father unfastened the locket and lo! there was a pearl of the purest white, so beautiful that for a moment they all held their breath.

Then Lucy thought of her locket and ran to look for it. All her searching was in vain. It was lost, and though she cried and cried she never found it.

God is our Father and He has given each of us a priceless pearl in a silver locket. The locket is our body and the pearl is our soul. If we take

care of our soul, we shall be happy forever in Heaven, but if we lose our soul, we shall cry forever in the flames of hell.

CHAPTER IV

GOD'S ADOPTED CHILDREN

When God had created the earth, the most beautiful spot was the Garden of Paradise. It was filled with giant trees and lovely flowers, whilst wonderful animals roamed through it. Everything was good, but there was no one to enjoy it, for the first man had not yet been created.

Then God took clay, shaped it into a body and breathed into it a soul. At once it stirred, the red blood ran through the living flesh and God looked upon the first man and called him Adam. Straight and strong he stood before his Maker. The cool morning breeze stirred his hair and he breathed in the sweet air of the Garden of Paradise. It was good to be alive. The bees hummed in the warm sunlight, the little birds sang with all their might, delicious fruits hung heavy from the branches of the trees and all the earth was filled with joy.

Adam was very beautiful. He was not as strong as the lion, he could not run as fast as the

deer, he could not see as far as the eagle, but he was king of all because he had a soul. He could think and he could speak, he could know and love God.

At night he slept without fear beneath the branches of some great tree. No beast ever harmed him. In the morning he awoke full of strength, played with the animals, plunged into the cool, clear waters of the streams and plucked the ripe fruits from the trees.

One day God put Adam into a deep sleep, took a rib from his side, formed it into the body of a woman and breathed into it a soul. When Adam awoke, he saw beside him a person like himself, he called her Eve and at once loved her more than anything on earth. With her he could enjoy everything more, together they could talk about the dear God who had made them both.

In the long afternoons God Himself came and talked with them. They asked Him questions and he told them wonderful things. He told them that as dearly as they loved each other, it was as nothing to His love for them; that they were more to Him than the whole world and that He would rather have the sun and stars go out

and the earth burn up than have the smallest sin creep into their hearts. And Adam and Eve thought they could never sin and hurt so good a God. Indeed, they knew nothing about sin—it was easy to be good and they did not want to do anything wrong. Their souls were as white as the lilies in the garden.

And God told them that when He put their souls into their bodies He adopted them as His own children, so that not only was He their Maker, but their Father. Oh, how happy and proud Adam and Eve felt when they learned that the great God was their Father. This made them holy and far greater than they would have been had God not adopted them. It gave them a right to His kingdom in Heaven and meant that some day they would go there and see Him face to face.

If you wanted to join the army, you would become a soldier by putting on the uniform of your country. But if ever you should turn and fight against your country, you would lose your uniform and be disgraced forever.

Now God adopted Adam and Eve by clothing their souls in sanctifying grace. But if ever

they should turn against God, they would lose sanctifying grace and be disgraced forever.

But to do such a terrible thing was far from their minds, and they only thought how they might please God and thank Him for having made them, and above all for having given them the priceless gift of sanctifying grace.

Their days were filled with gladness and they looked forward to the moment when they should see God, for although He spoke to them and may have used the shape of a body, they had never seen Him as He is.

And God has made you as well as Adam and Eve. But He could have made many other little boys and girls instead of you. Are you glad He didn't? Are you glad He made you? Have you ever thanked Him for making you?

CHAPTER V

THE FIRST SIN

In the middle of the Garden of Paradise, God planted two trees. One was the Tree of Life, and had Adam and Eve eaten of its fruit, they would have been free from every kind of sickness and would never have died. The other tree was the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, and of its fruit God forbade them ever to taste. He told them that they might eat the fruit of every other tree in the garden, but that if they ever ate the fruit of this tree they could no longer be His children, for they would lose sanctifying grace, and sickness and death and every other kind of trouble would come to them.

You may be sure that Adam and Eve kept away from that forbidden tree, for they did not want to disobey God, and they did not want to lose sanctifying grace.

But that horrid devil who once fought against God in Heaven and who was raging in hell, was jealous of Adam and Eve and did not want them to be God's adopted children. So one day he

crept into the beautiful garden, took the shape of a great snake and twined himself about a branch of the forbidden tree. Pretty soon he saw Eve coming towards the tree. Oh, why didn't she keep away? Why did she even want to look at that tree when God had told her what terrible things would happen if she and Adam should eat its fruit?

Closer and closer she came. Then the devil called: "Eve." She looked up and saw the great coils of the snake glittering among the leaves. She was not afraid, for not a single animal in the whole garden would hurt her. But she knew that this was more than a snake, for he had called her by name and God had not made any animal so that it could speak. She felt that something was wrong and she should have gone away as fast as she could. Instead of that she came nearer and the devil said to her: "Why don't you eat one of these nice apples? See how fine they are." And Eve answered: "No, indeed, God told us not to touch the fruit on that tree. He said that if we did we should die." Then the devil said: "Don't you know why God told you that? It is because if you eat this



And He cast out Adam; and placed before the paradise of pleasure Cherubims, and a flaming sword, turning every way, to keep the way of the tree of life. (Gen. 3:24.)

fruit you will be great like God and He doesn't want anyone to be great like Him."

Eve thought for a moment. She knew how good God was and how kind He had been, and how He had warned them. But she said to herself: "Suppose the devil is right. How fine it would be to be great like God."

She stretched out her hand, took an apple and bit into it. At once an ugly black mark covered her soul, the beautiful dress of sanctifying grace was gone. She looked up. The devil was not there. The tears sprang to her eyes. She had never cried before. Oh, how the devil had lied to her! Great like God? Why, she had lost all her greatness. A terrible something lay heavy on her heart and clutched at her throat. What could she do? Now she knew what it was to sin. The garden seemed so dark, a great cloud hid the sun. She was afraid. She had never been afraid before.

Adam would be looking for her. What would he say when he knew what she had done? Then there came to her the most terrible thought she could have had. Hadn't she done enough wrong as it was? But she went from one sin to the

other. She made up her mind to try to make Adam sin, too, and then he couldn't look down on her. Another ugly black mark spread over her soul.

She dried her eyes, made herself smile and, taking an apple, went to Adam. Laughing, she told him what the devil had said and what she had done, but she did not let him know what a terrible change had come over her. She coaxed him just to bite into the apple and Adam did so. A terrible black mark covered his soul and the beautiful dress of sanctifying grace was gone. An awful something lay heavy on his heart and clutched at his throat. What were they to do? They were afraid. The garden was so dark and a great cloud covered the sun.

God called them. They heard and ran and hid. His voice followed them. With their faces in their hands and crying, they came and stood before Him. He asked Adam why he had disobeyed Him and Adam blamed Eve. He asked Eve and she blamed the devil.

Then God told them that because of their terrible sin, sickness and suffering and trouble and death would come to them and to their chil-

dren — to every man and woman that would ever be born. He sent them out of the garden and placed His angels with flaming sword to guard the gate so that they might never come back.

If only Eve had urged Adam never to touch the forbidden fruit instead of coaxing him to eat it, the world would not be the sad place it is. And there are little boys and girls today who go around like Eve trying to make other little boys and girls sin, teaching them to say bad words and to do bad things. Never, never be one of them, for it is a terrible thing to help to make another child bad. And if ever you should learn something bad do not speak of it to anyone except to your mother or to the priest.

And if anyone coaxes you to do anything wrong, do not listen to him as Eve listened to the devil, or else you will be very sorry for it as she was. The only thing to do is to keep away from any one that makes you sin.

CHAPTER VI

THE GREAT PROMISE

Isn't it too bad that Adam and Eve sinned? You see, if they had only obeyed God, there never would have been anything but happiness in the world. There would be no wars, no suffering of any kind and best of all, we should never die. When God created our souls He would have clothed them in sanctifying grace so that we too should have been His adopted children, and then after a while, we should go to Heaven without dying. And our minds would be clear and we'd know everything we need to know and wouldn't have to go to school. Moreover, it would be easy to be good.

But all is very different now. Because we are Adam's and Eve's children, we are all born with a sin on our soul. This is called *original* sin, for it comes down to us from our *first* parents.

The first sin not only closed the gates of the Garden of Paradise, but also the gates of Heaven. Only God's adopted children are in Heaven.

What could Adam and Eve do to get back sanctifying grace? Nothing. What could they do to open the gates of Heaven? Nothing. Then can none of us go to Heaven?

God is so tender and kind that as Adam and Eve left the garden, crying, He had pity on them and told them that some day a woman would be born who would have a Son so great that He would open again the gates of Heaven. This promise was Adam's and Eve's only joy through the rest of their long lives.

Because this woman's Son, called the Redeemer, was going to come, God gave back to Adam and Eve sanctifying grace and He also gave this grace to many persons after them. But until the Redeemer came, Heaven was locked and the good people that died had to wait in a place called Limbo.

We must not blame Adam and Eve for everything. The world would be very pleasant if each person stopped sinning right now. And no matter what other people do, you and I shall always be happy, if we keep sin out of our own hearts.

Do you wish you could have Adam's chance? You have just about as good a chance right now.

Adam was in the garden and could have stayed if he had not sinned. You and I are not in the garden, but if we don't sin, we can get into a far more beautiful garden which is Heaven and once there, there will be no danger of our ever being put out.

I think I'd rather work my way into the garden and be sure of staying when I got there than be born in the garden and run the risk of being driven out.

Before Adam and Eve sinned, neither lions nor tigers nor wolves nor any other animals harmed them. And if we do not sin, nothing can harm us—neither headaches nor toothaches nor measles nor whooping-cough nor death itself. The only real harm is what hurts our soul, and sin is the only thing that does that.

Now I didn't say that toothaches don't hurt, but they can do us a great deal of good if we want them to. I'll tell you how.

Have you ever watched bees hurrying from flower to flower? They empty each one of its honey and never waste a second. They are not feeding, for they will carry home every drop and store it away. The bees do not care for the flow-

ers; it is only the honey they are after, and they know how to gather sweetness even from the bitterest plants.

Each of you can be a little bee and make honey all day long. Each day will be filled with flowers, but whether roses or thistles, don't miss one. If you have a toothache, say: "All for Thee, my God," and at once God will put by something nice for you that you will enjoy forever when you get to Heaven, and this is the way you will draw honey from something very bitter. When you go to school, say: "All for Thee, my God," and there will be more honey stored away in Heaven. Whatever you do, whether you eat or play or work or are sick, say: "All for Thee, dear God." What an enormous honeycomb you will be able to make. This is the kind of honey God likes. Aren't you glad that you can make something for Him?

How happy you will be when God shows you what you were storing up for yourselves when you gave to Him everything you did.

I once went to see a little girl who was sick. Her name was Mary. When I was leaving I said to her: "I hope you will soon be well,

Mary." She answered: "As God wants." How God must have loved that little girl, for she only wanted what He wanted.

I knew another little girl who had to work very hard at home. She told me that when she did the washing she kept saying: "All for Thee, my God," as she jumped up and down to rub the clothes on the washboard.

That little girl knew how to make honey.

CHAPTER VII

THE FORTY DAYS' RAIN

I am going to tell you about the time when it rained for forty days and forty nights. It was hundreds of years after Adam and Eve had left the garden, and all the people living on earth had grown very bad. They never said their prayers, they never thought about their souls or about God, and they hadn't a bit of love for Him in their hearts.

But there was one good man, and his name was Noe. One day God spoke to him and told him that the men and women and children were so bad that He was going to send a great flood to drown them all, but that he and his three sons and their three wives would be saved.

He then told Noe to build an enormous boat, or ark, and showed him just how long, and how wide, and how high to make it. It was to be three stories high.

What was the use of such a big boat? You see, God did not want all the animals to be lost, and so He told Noe that he must take with him two



"And the ark rested in the seventh month, the seventh and twentieth day of the month, upon the mountains of Armenia." (Gen. viii, 4.)

of every kind, and that he must also carry enough food for them and for his own family.

It took Noe a great many years to build the ark, and the people stood around and laughed at him. But he told them that God was going to punish them for their sins, and that they had better be sorry for them, and try to be good before it was too late. They only made fun of what he said, and kept on sinning as much as they pleased.

At last when everything was ready and two of every kind of animal had gone into the ark, Noe and his family went in and closed the door, and God fastened it on the outside.

At once the sky grew black, the rain poured down in torrents, and the rivers rose up over their banks and flooded all the land. The people climbed up into the trees and ran to the tops of the hills. Some of them shouted to Noe and begged him to take them into the ark.

Lions and tigers jumped to the highest rocks they could reach, and snarled and bit at the rising waves. Many little birds stayed in their nests, for they would not fly away and leave their eggs.

The waters rose day by day, until they washed

over the tops of the highest mountains, and every man and beast was drowned, but the ark floated safely over all.

After forty days the rain stopped, and a strong wind blew, which helped to dry up the sea. Each day the water sank a little lower, but still Noe could not see a bit of land. One day he opened the window and let out a raven. It never came back. It stayed to feast on the floating bodies of the dead.

He next let out a little dove. It flew away, but as it could find no spot on which to rest, it came back. A second time he let out the dove, and in the evening it flew into the ark, carrying in its mouth a little olive sprig. They then knew that somewhere the trees were appearing above the water.

The third time Noe let out the dove it did not return. Soon after the ark struck the top of a mountain, and when the earth had sufficiently dried, Noe and his family, and all the animals, came out. It was good to be on dry land once more, and the first thing that Noe and his sons did was to thank God for having taken such care of them.

How different everything looked. It was so quiet and still and lonesome. Yet it was nice too, to be rid of all the bad people.

Then God told Noe that never again would He destroy the earth by water. As a mark of His promise He placed the rainbow in the sky, and told him that whenever he saw a rainbow to remember His words to him.

Every night, when we kneel down to say our prayers, let us think over the day to see what wrong things we have done. Then let us tell God how sorry we are to have hurt Him so often, and that we will try very hard not to commit any sins tomorrow, and then let us beg Him to forgive us.

You see, if the people had only been sorry for their sins, and had asked God to forgive them when Noe told them to do so, God might never have sent the flood and, although God promised never to send another flood, we must beg Him to forgive us, for burning in hell is far worse than being drowned.

CHAPTER VIII

THE THREE GUESTS

Long after the great rain there lived a good man named Abraham. He was very rich, and had many servants and camels and herds of cattle and flocks of sheep.

One evening God came to him and told him that He would make him the father of a great people who would be His favorite nation, and that to count them would be as easy as to count the grains of sand on the seashore; and that among his people would one day be born the Redeemer, who would open Heaven to the whole world.

Then Abraham gathered all he owned, and taking his wife, Sara, and his nephew, Lot, travelled to the beautiful new country to which God led him. The land was to be the home of the chosen race that would call Abraham their father. These people are now scattered over the whole world, and we call them Jews.

After a while Abraham thought it would be best for him and his nephew to separate, so that

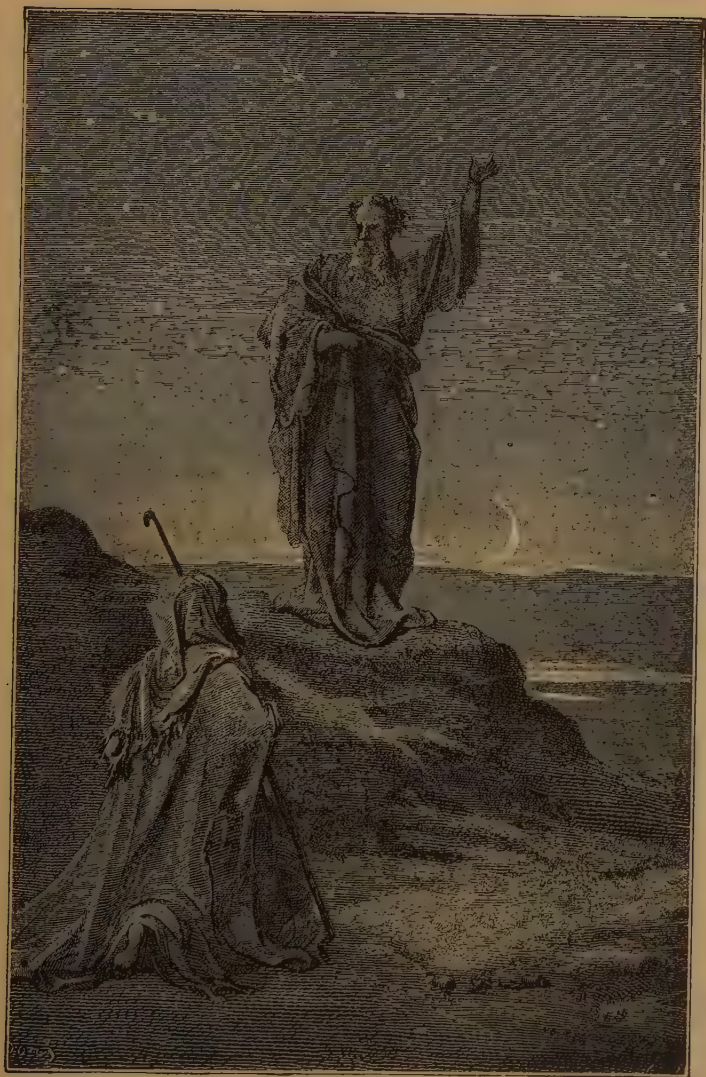
they might each have more land on which to pasture their flocks. So Lot left and went to live in a very bad city, called Sodom.

One day, in the heat of the noon-time, Abraham was sitting at the door of his tent. Looking up, he saw three strangers coming toward him. At once he went to meet them, and found them to be young men of great beauty. He invited them to stop with him, and went into the fields and picked out a fine young calf, which he had killed and cooked for dinner. Then he told Sara to bake some hearth-cakes, and he brought out milk and butter, and the strangers ate beneath the shade of a tree whilst he stood by.

When they had eaten, they told him that God was going to give him a son. Abraham and Sara were very glad to hear this, for they had no children.

Abraham walked with the angels when they left, and he saw that they took the road to Sodom. They told him that God was offended by the sins of that city, and was going to destroy it.

Then Abraham began to pray, and begged God not to destroy the good with the wicked, and asked whether He would spare the city if



And the Lord God said to Abram: "Go forth out of the country . . . and come into the land which I will show thee. And I will make of thee a great nation, . . . and in thee will all the kindred of the earth be blessed." (Gen. 12:1, 2, 3.)

there were fifty just persons within it, and God said He would.

But there were not fifty good persons in the whole place. So Abraham begged God to spare the city if there could be found forty-five good persons, and God said He would. Then getting bolder in his prayers, he asked God to spare the city if there were only forty, then thirty, then twenty, then ten good persons, and God said He would. But among all the people not even ten just men could be found.

Then Abraham went home very sad, and the two angels entered into the city to warn Lot, for God wished to spare him on Abraham's account.

The next morning the angels took Lot and his wife and his two daughters by the hand, and hurried them away, and told them not to look back. When they were at a safe distance, fire and brimstone fell from heaven, and the city and all the country about was destroyed.

Lot's wife, in spite of the angels' warning, looked back to see what was happening, and at once she was turned into a pillar of salt.

Early that same morning Abraham got up and looked towards Sodom, and saw the whole place

on fire, whilst the flames and smoke arose as from a mighty furnace. But Lot and his daughters took refuge in the mountains.

Abraham and Sara called the son God sent them Isaac, and when the child had grown to be a young man, God said He wanted back the life of the boy He had given. Poor Abraham was broken-hearted as he listened, for God told him to take Isaac and kill him with his own hand.

Abraham was accustomed to offer to God from time to time the best of his sheep and cattle by killing them. This was called offering sacrifice, and the animal that was slain was called the victim. People had always offered sacrifices, for God Himself had taught Adam and Eve to do so after they had sinned. Sacrifices were offered so that men would not forget that everything they had belonged to God, that sin brought suffering into the world, and that they should be ready to give not only the lives of the animals, but their own lives, to make up for their sins.

All this Abraham had done, but never before had God asked for the life of a person. Still, Abraham did not hesitate. He knew that both he and his son belonged to God, who had a right

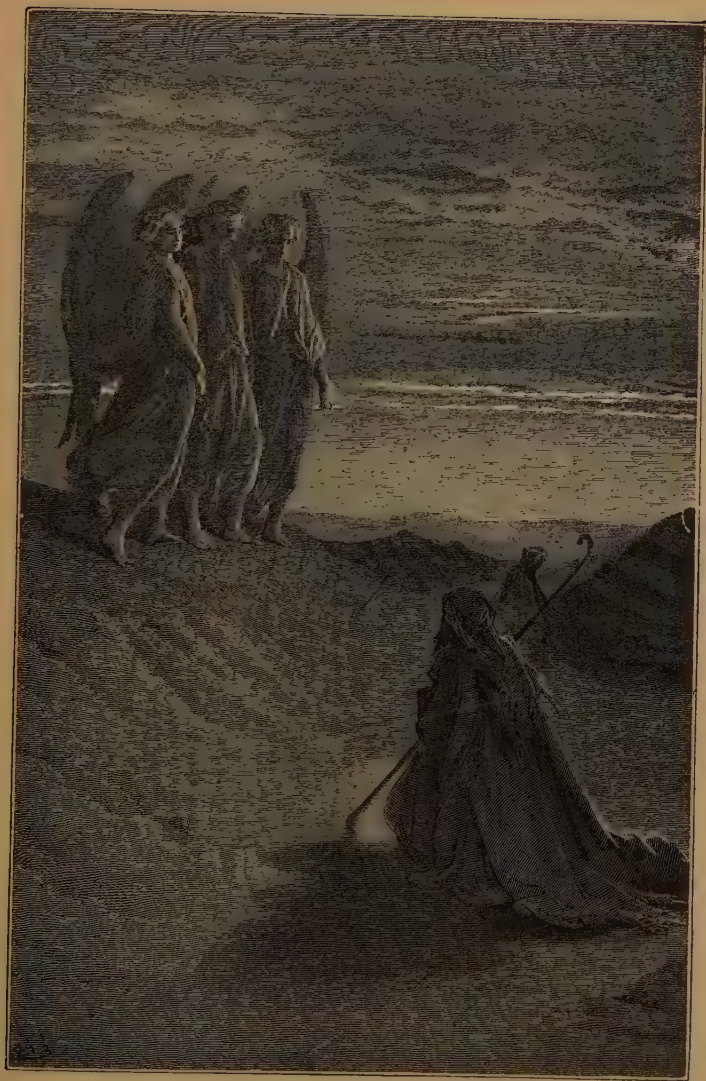
to their lives, and above all, he loved God with his whole heart, even more than he loved Isaac.

So he got up in the night and took with him two young men, and his son; and, when he had cut wood for the sacrifice, they started on their journey.

On the third day they came to the mountain, and Abraham told the young men to wait there whilst he and the boy went farther to worship God. He placed the wood on Isaac's shoulder, and carried in his hands fire and a sword.

As they climbed up the mountains, Isaac, who knew they were going to offer sacrifice, asked his father where the victim was. But his father could only answer that God would see to that, for he could not bear to tell him that he himself was the victim.

At last they reached the top of the mountain, and Abraham built an altar and laid the wood on it, for, after he had slain the boy, he would burn his body. Then he tied Isaac and laid him on the wood, and raising the sword was just going to kill him, when an angel seized his arm and stopped him. The angel told him that God had only done this to try his love, and to see



And as soon as he saw them he ran to meet them from the door of his tent, and adored down to the ground. (Gen. 18:2.)

whether he was willing for His sake to kill his only son he loved so much. Then the angel pointed to a ram that was caught by the horns in a bush nearby, and told him to sacrifice the animal, but not to hurt Isaac.

God was pleased with Abraham, and told him that He would bless him and his children's children, and promised once more that among his people would be born the Redeemer, the Saviour of the world.

CHAPTER IX

THE TWELVE BROTHERS

Once there were twelve brothers who were shepherds. They were Abraham's great-grandsons. Their father, Jacob, loved Joseph best of all and this made the others very jealous. And when one day their father gave Joseph a beautiful coat of many colors, the brothers grew very angry.

Now Joseph had a dream one night, and he said to his brothers: "Hear my dream which I dreamed.

"I thought we were binding sheaves in the field: and my sheaf arose as it were, and stood, and your sheaves standing about, bowed down before my sheaf." (Gen. 37:6, 7.)

Then the brothers hated him still more and said: "Shalt thou be our king?" (ver. 8).

And Joseph had another dream which he told his father and brothers, saying: "I saw in a dream, as it were, the sun, and the moon, and eleven stars worshipping me" (ver. 9). But his father scolded him and asked: "What meaneth

this dream that thou hast dreamed? Shall I and thy mother, and thy brethren worship thee upon the earth?" (ver. 10).

One day the brothers were far away feeding their flocks and Jacob sent Joseph to see how they were. And when they saw Joseph coming in the distance, they said: "Here comes the dreamer. Let's kill him and throw him into some old pit and say that he was eaten up by a wild beast." But Ruben wanted to save his brother's life, and so he said: "Don't let's kill him but just throw him into this pit." And Ruben meant to come back later and draw Joseph out.

So when Joseph came up to them, they pulled off his coat of many colors and threw him into the pit.

And whilst they were eating their lunch, they saw some men passing by on their camels. They were on their way to Egypt to sell sweet spices.

Then Juda said to the others: "What good will it do us to kill Joseph and then try to hide what we have done? Let's sell him to these men." So they drew the boy out of the pit and sold him for twenty pieces of silver.

Then they took the coat of many colors and

dipped it in the blood of a kid which they killed and they sent the coat to their father with the message: "This we have found: see whether it be thy son's coat or not" (ver. 32). And when Jacob saw Joseph's coat all covered with blood, he thought he had been eaten up by a wild beast, and he cried and cried and no one could stop him.

When the merchants reached Egypt, they sold Joseph to a captain in the King's army.

All went well with Joseph until the captain's wife, getting angry, lied about him and had him thrown into prison. Here Joseph found the chief baker who made the fine breads and cakes for Pharaoh, the King, and the chief butler who poured the sparkling wine into the King's own cup.

Now one night, the baker and butler each had a dream and they were worried because they could not think what it meant. And they spoke to Joseph, and he said that no one could tell what a dream meant unless God let him know. Now God loved Joseph very much and always took care of him and He also let him know the meaning of dreams when He Himself sent them. God

does not send all our dreams, but once in a while He speaks to certain persons by a dream and then He always lets them know what the dream means. But unless they come from God, dreams have no meaning at all.

The butler told his dream first and said: "I saw before me a vine, on which were three branches, which by little and little sent out buds, and after the blossoms brought forth ripe grapes. And the cup of Pharaoh was in my hand: and I took the grapes and pressed them into the cup which I held, and I gave the cup to Pharaoh (40:9-11).

Then Joseph said: "The three branches are three days after which Pharaoh will remember how you used to pour the wine into his cup. Then he will send for you and you will wait on him once more. But when you are free again, remember me and ask the King to take me out of this prison. For I was stolen away from my own country and without any fault of mine, was thrown into this dungeon."

Then the baker said: "I also dreamed a dream, That I had three baskets of meal upon my head:

“And that in one basket which was uppermost, I carried all meats that are made by the art of baking, and that the birds ate out of it.’

“Joseph answered: ‘The three baskets are yet three days:’

“After which Pharaoh will take thy head from thee, and hang thee on a cross, and the birds shall tear thy flesh.’

“The third day after this was the birthday of Pharaoh and he made a great feast for his servants and at the banquet remembered the chief butler and the chief baker” (ver. 16-20).

And the King sent for the butler and let him pour his wine once more, but the baker he hanged.

And the butler being free again, forgot all about poor Joseph.

After two long years, Pharaoh himself had a dream. He thought he stood by the river out of which came seven beautiful cows, sleek and fat, and they fed in marshy places. Then out of the river came seven miserable, thin cows and they ate up the seven fat cows and yet were as thin as before. Then the King woke up, but falling asleep again, he had another dream:

"Seven ears of corn came up upon one stalk full and fair:

"Then seven other ears sprung up thin and blasted" (41:5, 6). And the bad ears ate up the good ears.

Then Pharaoh awoke and when morning was come, being very much afraid, he sent for all the wise men of Egypt. And when they had all gathered in the palace, the King told them his dreams. But not one was able to tell their meaning. At last the butler remembered Joseph and told the King that there was in prison a young Hebrew who could tell the meaning of dreams.

Then Pharaoh commanded Joseph to be brought before him. And he said to him: "I have dreamed dreams but no one can tell me their meaning." And Joseph said: "God will give thee an answer through me."

Then the King told his dreams and Joseph answered that the seven fat cows and the seven full ears were seven years of great plenty in Egypt when the crops would be very great. And that the seven thin cows and the seven bad ears of corn were seven years of want and famine that would come after the seven years of plenty and

that during them, all the grain that had been grown in the good years would be eaten up.

And Joseph told the King to place one man over the whole country to see that barns were built so that plenty of grain could be stored away to feed the people during the seven bad years.

The King was delighted with Joseph's answer and seeing that he was wiser than any other man in the land, he placed him in charge of the whole of Egypt.

Now everything happened just as Joseph had said, and when the seven years of want had spread over the whole world, "there was bread in all the land of Egypt" (ver. 54). And when the people, growing hungry, cried to Pharaoh for food, he said to them: "Go to Joseph: and do all that he shall say to you" (ver. 55).

The famine grew greater day by day, and Joseph opened all the barns and sold grain to the people. And all the other countries sent to Egypt to buy food.

"And Jacob hearing that food was sold in Egypt, said to his sons: 'Why are ye careless?

"I have heard that wheat is sold in Egypt: go ye down, and buy.'" (42:1, 2).

So the ten brothers went down to Egypt whilst Jacob kept Benjamin, the youngest, at home lest some harm come to him upon the journey.

When the brothers stood before Joseph, they did not know him but he knew them and pretended that he thought they were spies. But they said that they were all brothers who had come only to buy corn and that their youngest brother was at home.

Then Joseph said that one of them would have to stay whilst the others went home and brought Benjamin back to show that they had spoken the truth. So they left Simeon and went off with their bags filled with corn.

Jacob was very sad when he heard all that happened and he was unwilling to let Benjamin go for he loved him dearly. But when at last they had eaten all the corn and Juda promised that he would bring Benjamin back in safety, Jacob let them leave.

When Joseph saw his brothers once more and had looked upon Benjamin, he longed to tell them who he was. But he wanted first to see whether their hearts had changed since the day they had planned to kill him. So he ordered his

steward to fill their sacks with corn and to place in Benjamin's sack his own silver cup.

And when it was morning, the brothers left the city. Then Joseph sent his steward after them to say that they had stolen his silver cup. The steward did as he was told, but the brothers declared that they had not stolen the cup and that if it were found with them, they would go back and be the servants of Joseph.

Quickly they unloaded their sacks and opened them and the steward searched, beginning with the oldest. When he came to the youngest, there was the silver cup in Benjamin's sack! With heavy hearts, they went back to Joseph and said that they would stay and be his servants. But Joseph said that they could all go home except Benjamin.

Thereupon Juda went up to Joseph and begged him to keep him in place of his brother, and he told him how he had promised to bring Benjamin back in safety and that his father loved him so greatly that he would die if he did not return.

Then Joseph said to them all: "Come nearer to me. . . . I am Joseph, your brother, whom you sold into Egypt. Be not afraid (ver. 4, 5).

for God let all happen so that I might save you from dying of hunger. Hurry home and bring back our father and everything you own and I will give you land to live upon and will feed you, for there are yet five years of famine.”

And Jacob cried for joy when he heard that Joseph was alive, and he and his whole family settled in Egypt and lived there happily for many years.

CHAPTER X

THE HARP PLAYER

God was the king of Abraham's people, the Jews. He took care of them and told them what to do. But after a time they wanted one of their own men for a king. Weren't they foolish to want a man to rule over them instead of God? So they went to their judge, Samuel, and told him they must have a king. Samuel spoke to God, who told him to tell the Jews that it was wrong for them to want any one to take His place, and that, besides, if they had a king, it would bring them a great deal of trouble, for the king would have to live in style, and they would be obliged to give him many servants, and horses, and chariots, and oxen, and sheep, and a part of their crops.

When the people had heard all this, they still insisted upon having a king, so God let them have their own way, and chose from among them a good man named Saul. The Jews were pleased with their first king, for he was fine looking, and so tall that he stood head and shoulders above them all.

All went well for a couple of years, and then Saul disobeyed God, and an evil spirit came upon him. He would sit for hours in a terrible rage in his tent, and his servants were afraid to go near him.

At that time there was living in the little town of Bethlehem a man named Isai, who had eight sons. The youngest, named David, took care of his father's sheep on the hillsides. He was a strong, beautiful boy, and loved God with all his heart, and wasn't afraid of anything. He was very skillful with his sling. It wasn't the kind of sling you use, but was a sort of leather bag in which shepherds placed a stone and then whirled round and round so that the stone flew out with a great deal of force. In some parts of the world shepherds still use them, and some boys aim very accurately, so that they seldom fail to hit an object, though it is a great distance away. And David could play the harp so sweetly that he charmed all who heard him.

Now, one day, when Saul was in a fit of anger, someone thought of David, the little shepherd boy, and told the king how beautifully he could play. Then the king sent for David, and when

Isai's three oldest sons had joined the king's army, and one day their father sent David to the camp to carry food.

For the first time David saw Goliath, and heard him dare any one to fight. But all the warriors slunk into their tents.

Thereupon David spoke to the king and said that he would fight the giant. But Saul told him that he could not, for he was only a boy. Then David told the king how one day he was guarding his father's sheep when a lion and a bear came upon the flock and carried off a ram; how he went after them and struck them and saved the ram; and how when the beasts then attacked him, he caught them by the throat and killed them.

"And David said: 'The Lord who delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, He will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine.' And Saul said to David: 'Go, and the Lord be with thee.'

"And Saul clothed David with his garments, and put a helmet of brass upon his head, and armed him with a coat of mail.

"And David having girded his sword upon

his armour, began to try if he could walk in armour, for he was not accustomed to it. And David said to Saul: 'I can not go thus, for I am not used to it.' And he laid them off.

"And he took his staff, which he had always in his hands, and chose him five smooth stones out of the brook, and put them into the shepherd's scrip, which he had with him, and he took a sling in his hand, and went forth against the Philistine." (1 Kings 17:37-40.)

And Goliath came forth, and when he saw David coming to meet him, he laughed at one so young, and asked whether he thought him a dog, that he came against him with only a stick in his hand. Then he cursed the boy and said: "'Come to me and I will give thy flesh to the birds of the air, and to the beasts of the earth.'

"And David said to the Philistine: 'Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the Lord.'" (44-45.)

And David hurried and ran to meet the giant. "And he put his hand into his scrip, and took a stone, and cast it with the sling, and fetching it about struck the Philistine in the forehead: and

the stone was fixed in his forehead and he fell on his face upon the earth." (Verse 49.)

Then David ran up to Goliath, and, drawing out the giant's sword, cut off his head and held it up for all to see.

At this the Philistines were so frightened that they fled, and Saul's army gained a great victory; and the people came out to meet David, and all praised him and made more of him than of the king, for there was none like him in all the land.

Years later, David became king of the Jews. He was a man after God's own heart and told some sad things about the Redeemer who would one day be born in his family. He said that men would make terrible wounds in His hands and in His feet.

CHAPTER XI

THE KING WHO WANTED TO OWN THE WORLD

Once upon a time there was a great king and he wanted to own the whole world. So he sent his general, Holofernes, with an immense army, to kill all the people that weren't willing to belong to him. One city after the other opened its gates and promised to do anything he wanted if only he would spare their lives.

When the Jews heard of these things they were very much afraid that Holofernes would come to them and destroy their great city, Jerusalem.

As Jerusalem was built among mountains and steep hills, the Jews placed guards on the tops of the mountains and watched the paths that led into the city. Then they stored up food and got ready for war. And all the people cried to God to take care of them and they went without eating, and prayed night and day, and the high-priest told them that if they kept on praying, God would not let them be hurt. The Jews at this time were the only people that believed in God, for the other nations made gods for themselves out of wood and stone.

Now some one brought word to Holofernes that the Jews were getting ready to keep him out of their country. Then he was very angry, and asked what kind of people these Jews were that they dared to close their city to him when all other nations came out to meet him? And one of the captains stood forth and said that he could tell about these people who lived in the mountains. He said that they adored just one God who had given them the country where they lived. And that once when there was no food to be had in all the land, they had gone down to Egypt and stayed there for four hundred years. And the king of Egypt made them his slaves and forced them to build his cities, but when they cried to their God for help, He sent such troubles to the people of Egypt that the king let them go. And as they fled from Egypt they came to the Red Sea and had no way to cross. Then God opened a path for them through the sea and the waters stood firm as a wall on both sides, and they walked on the floor of the sea without even wetting their feet. And when the king got sorry that he had let them go and sent an army after them to bring them back, the army followed in

the same path, but the waters came together again and every man was drowned.

And after the Jews came out of the Red Sea, they lived for forty years in a desert, where no one had ever been able to live before, but God made the bitter waters sweet and gave them food from heaven. Then they came back to the same country their fathers had left to go to Egypt. But no one was able to beat these people if God was with them, and only when they had sinned very much or begun to adore other gods like the pagan nations, did their God let the enemy take them.

And he said that Holofernes had better find out whether they had been sinning, for if they had, he could easily capture them; but if they had not, it were better to leave them alone, for their God could save them from any army.

When the captain had finished speaking, Holofernes was angry with him because he had said that the God of the Jews could save them from any army, and he told him that there was no god but the king and that he would kill all the Jews and then kill him too.

So Holofernes ordered his servants to give the captain over to the Jews. And they took him away, and when they had come near to the mountains, they bound him hand and foot, and tied him to a tree and left him. Soon the Jews came down, and unbinding him, brought him into the midst of their people. And they asked him what the trouble was, and he told them all that had happened. Then the people fell upon their faces and prayed to God to save them.

The next day Holofernes gave orders to his soldiers to march towards Jerusalem. When the Jews saw such a great army coming against them, they knew that only God could save them, and they fell upon the ground and begged Him for help. Then they set guards at the paths between the mountains, and all day and night they watched.

Now Holofernes found the fountain and springs which supplied them with water, and he placed about a hundred men at every spring so that they could no longer draw water. And after twenty days all the water in the city gave out, and the people could get no more, and they had nothing to drink. Then all the men and

women and children came to the king and told him that they should have tried to make peace with the enemy instead of war, and that the wisest thing they could do now, was to give themselves up, for it was better to be taken as prisoners, or killed at once by the sword, than to slowly die from thirst.

“And when they had said these things, there was great weeping . . . and for many hours with one voice they cried to God, saying:

“‘We have sinned. . . . Have Thou mercy on us, because Thou art good.’” . . . (Judith 7:18-20.)

“And when being wearied with these cries, and tired with these weepings, they held their peace.

“Ozias rising up all in tears, said: ‘Be of good courage, my brethren, and let us wait these five days for mercy from the Lord.

“‘But if after five days be past there come no aid, we will do the things which you have spoken.’” (7:22, 23, 25.)

Now, there was living at that time a very holy woman named Judith, and her husband had been dead for more than three years. She dwelt in

the upper part of her house with her maids, and spent her days in prayer.

“And she was exceedingly beautiful, and her husband left her great riches, and very many servants, and large possessions of herds of oxen, and flocks of sheep.” (8:7.)

When she heard what Ozias, the king, had said, she sent for two of the ancients and told them that they should not give up the city in five days, but keep on praying and remember that their sufferings were not as great as their sins had been, and that God had always let troubles come to His best friends, for the greater their sorrows here, the greater their joy will be in Heaven.

And Ozias and the ancients answered: “‘All things which thou hast spoken are true. . . . Now, therefore, pray for us, for thou art a holy woman, and one fearing God.’

“And Judith said to them: . . . ‘You shall stand at the gate this night, and I will go out with my maid-servant: and pray ye, that as you have said in five days the Lord may look down upon His people. But I desire that you search not into what I am doing, and till I bring you word

let nothing else be done but to pray for me to the Lord our God.'” (8:28-30, 32, 33.)

When they had left, Judith prayed again to God, and then she washed and put on her finest garments and took her bracelets and her earrings and her rings. And God made her even more beautiful than before, because she did not dress up to show off, but to save her people. And she gave her maid wine and oil and figs and bread and cheese to take with them, and they went down to the gate of the city. And the king and the ancients were waiting for her, and they were struck by her great beauty. But they asked her no questions, and she passed on.

About break of day she came to the watchmen of the enemy, who stopped her and asked her where she came from and where she was going. And she said that she wished to see Holofernes, and when they saw how beautiful she was, they brought her to his tent. Holofernes was sitting beneath a canopy woven of purple and gold with emeralds and precious stones. And Judith bowed down before him and he told her not to be afraid, and, at sight of her beauty, he was willing to give her anything she asked.

And she spoke so wisely that all were won by her, and Holofernes ordered her to be taken where his treasures were, and for food to be given her from his own table. But she said that she would only eat what her maid had brought.

And Judith asked that she might be allowed to go out at night and before day to pray. And Holofernes commanded that she should pass in and out as she pleased.

On the fourth day Holofernes gave a supper, and invited Judith. She ate and drank what her maid fixed for her, but Holofernes was so merry that he drank more than he had ever drunk in all his life.

"And when it was grown late, his servants made haste to their lodgings. . . . And Judith was alone, but Holofernes lay on his bed, fast asleep, being exceedingly drunk.

"And Judith spoke to her maid to stand without . . . and to watch.

"And Judith stood before the bed praying with tears. . . .

"Saying: 'Strengthen me, O Lord God. . . .'

"And when she had said this, she went to the

pillar that was at his bed's head, and loosed his sword that hung tied upon it.

"And when she had drawn it out, she took him by the hair of his head and said: 'Strengthen me, O Lord God. . . .'

"And she struck twice upon his neck, and cut off his head . . . and rolled away his headless body.

"And after a while she went out, and delivered the head of Holofernes to her maid and bade her put it into her wallet.

"And they two went out, according to their custom, as it were to prayer, and they passed the camp and . . . they came to the gate of the city.

"And Judith from afar off cried to the watchmen upon the walls: 'Open the gates, for God is with us. . . .'

"And it came to pass, when the men had heard her voice, that they called the ancients of the city.

"And all ran to meet her from the least to the greatest: for they now had no hopes that she would come.

"And lighting up lights, they all gathered round about her: and she went up to a higher

place, and commanded silence to be made. And when all had held their peace,

“Judith said: ‘Praise ye, the Lord our God. . . . He hath killed the enemy of His people by my hand this night.’

“Then she brought forth the head of Holofernes out of the wallet, and shewed it them, saying: ‘Behold the head of Holofernes, the general of the army.’

“And Judith said to all the people: ‘Hear me, my brethren, hang ye up this head upon our walls.

“‘And as soon as the sun shall rise, let every man take his arms.

“‘Then the watchmen must needs run to awake their prince for the battle.

“‘And when the captains of them shall run to the tent of Holofernes, and shall find him without his head . . . fear shall fall upon them.

“‘And when you shall know that they are fleeing, go after them.’

“And immediately at break of day they hung up the head of Holofernes upon the walls, and every man took his arms, and they went out with a great noise and shouting.

"And the watchmen seeing this, ran to the tent of Holofernes.

"And they . . . made a noise before the door . . . to awake him. . . .

"For no man durst knock." (13:1, 3-19; 14:1-5, 7-10.)

Then one of the men clapped his hands, but as all was still, "he came near to the curtain, and lifting it up, and seeing the body of Holofernes, lying upon the ground, without the head . . . he cried out with weeping. . . .

"And he went into the tent of Judith, and not finding her, he ran out to the people." (Jud. 14:15.)

And when all the army heard that Holofernes was dead, their courage left them and they thought only of saving their lives. And they fled across the fields, leaving all their treasures behind. And the Jews went after them with the edge of the sword, and when they came to the end of their own country, they returned and made themselves rich with all the enemy had left. And the gold and silver and precious stones that had belonged to Holofernes, they gave to Judith.

And the high-priest came from Jerusalem with

his ancients to see Judith, and "they all blessed her with one voice, saying: 'Thou art the glory of Jerusalem, thou art the joy of Israel, thou art the honor of our people.'" (15:10.)

For three months the people celebrated their victory with Judith, and in all the land there was none like her. And when years later she died, they mourned for her seven days.

CHAPTER XII

THE MAN WHO WOULD NOT SIN

Once there was a man named Job who loved God very much. He had seven sons and three daughters, and was looked up to by all the people. He was also very rich and owned thousands of sheep and of camels and of oxen.

One day God said before His angels that there was no one in the whole world like Job. And the devil hearing this, answered that it was very easy for Job to bless God because he had everything he wanted ; but just let him lose his children and his servants and his wealth, and then he would not bless God. And God told the devil that he might do as he pleased with all that Job owned so long as he did not hurt Job himself.

So one day, when his sons and daughters had gone to visit their eldest brother, and were eating and drinking with him in his house, a messenger came to Job and told him that whilst his oxen were plowing in the fields, the enemy had fallen upon them and carried them off, after slaying the servants, and that he alone had escaped.

And whilst he was speaking, another servant ran in and said that fire had destroyed all the sheep as well as the men who were tending them, and that he was the only one who had escaped.

And whilst he was telling these things, another servant came in and said that an enemy had carried off all the camels and killed their keepers, and that he was the only one that had escaped.

The last man was still speaking when a fourth servant rushed in and said that a terrible wind had risen from the desert and blown down the house where his sons and daughters were eating and drinking, and they were all dead, whilst he alone had escaped.

Then Job arose and tore his clothes in grief and fell upon the ground and adored God, saying: "The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away: as it hath pleased the Lord so is it done: blessed be the name of the Lord.'" (Job 1:21.)

And Job did not say a single word against God.

And again God said before His angels that there was no one in the whole world like Job. And the devil hearing this, answered that if only he could hurt Job's body, Job would no longer

bless God. And the Lord told him he might do as he pleased with Job, but to save his life.

Then the devil struck Job with a terrible sore that covered him from the sole of his foot to the top of his head.

And Job sat on a dunghill and scraped his sores. And his wife came and asked him whether he would bless God now. But Job told her that she spoke like a foolish woman, and he said: "If we have received good things at the hand of God, why should we not receive evil?" (2:10.)

And Job did not say a single sinful word.

Now when Job's three friends heard of his troubles, they came to visit him and comfort him. And when they saw him in the distance, they did not know him. And weeping they sat with him on the ground for seven days and seven nights and did not speak, for they saw that he was suffering very much.

At last Job broke the silence, and then his friends, each in turn, talked to his heart's content, but gave poor Job very little comfort. They told him that he must have committed some awful sins for God to punish him in so terrible a way,

and that bad people always suffered, and that if only he would be sorry for his sins, God would let him be happy once more.

Poor Job got very tired of their long-winded talks, and asked them whether they would ever stop. He declared that he had not sinned, but had ever obeyed God, and that he would always love and obey Him, no matter what happened, and he said: “‘Although He should kill me, I will trust in Him.’” (13:15.)

And he showed his friends that God very often lets bad men enjoy themselves and have everything they want, for they will be punished after they die.

After this the devil kept quiet and did not say anything more, for he saw that there was nothing he could do to make Job turn against the Lord.

And God was pleased with Job because he blessed Him in his suffering. And Job got well and had more sheep and oxen and camels than he had lost. And God gave him seven more sons and three more daughters, and he lived after these things one hundred and forty years.

CHAPTER XIII

INSIDE THE WHALE

One day God spoke to a man named Jonas, and told him to go to the great city of Ninive, and there to preach to the people, for they had grown very wicked.

How would you feel if you were told to go to a strange city and there tell the people to stop sinning? That was the way Jonas felt, only he should have known that since God had told him to go, God would manage things when he reached there. But instead of obeying, Jonas ran away to the sea where he found a ship ready to sail. So he paid his fare and went on board.

“But the Lord sent a great wind into the sea: and a great tempest was raised in the sea, and the ship was in danger to be broken.

“And the mariners were afraid, and the men cried to their God, and they cast forth the wares that were in the ship, into the sea, to lighten it of them: and Jonas went down into the inner part of the ship, and fell into a deep sleep.

“And the shipmaster came to him, and said to

him: 'Why art thou fast asleep? Rise up, call upon thy God, if so be that God will think of us, that we may not perish.'” (Jonas 1:4-6.)

And the sailors crowded together and said that the terrible storm must be a punishment for the sins of one of them. But how could they tell which one it was? They decided to cast lots, and the lot fell upon Jonas.

Then they gathered about Jonas and asked him why this trouble had come upon them, and what his business was, and what country he came from, and where he was going, and who he was.

Jonas told them that he was a Jew, and that he adored the God in Heaven who made the land and the sea. And he related what God had commanded him to do, and how he did not want to go to Ninive, and so was running away.

“And the men were greatly afraid, and they said to him: ‘Why hast thou done this?’” (1:10.)

And they asked him what they should do to him in order to stop the storm, for the great swells of the sea were breaking over them.

“And he said to them: ‘Take me up and cast me into the sea, and the sea shall be calm to you:

for I know that for my sake, this great tempest is upon you.'” (1:12.)

The men did not like to do this, so they rowed hard towards the shore. But the sea raged and tossed and pitched them about so that they were unable to reach the land. Therefore, they took Jonas and threw him into the sea, and at once the storm stopped and the water was calm. At this the men feared God very much and offered sacrifices to Him.

But the Lord brought it about that as Jonas fell into the sea, he was swallowed up by a whale, and he stayed three days and three nights inside the fish.

And Jonas prayed to God from within the whale, and by the power of the Lord the whale threw him up on dry land.

And a second time God spoke to Jonas and said: “‘Arise and go to Ninive, the great city: and preach in it.’” (3:2.)

This time Jonas did not run away, but got right up and went to Ninive, and as he came into the city, he cried out that in forty days it would be destroyed.

And the men of Ninive believed in God, and

believed what Jonas said, and every one of them put on sackcloth and went without eating.

And when the king heard what Jonas was saying, he got off his throne and laid aside his robes, and dressed in sackcloth, and sat in ashes. And he gave orders, saying: "Let neither men nor beasts, oxen nor sheep, taste anything: let them not feed, nor drink water.

"And let men and beasts be covered with sackcloth, and cry to the Lord with all their strength, and let them turn every one from his evil way. . . .

"Who can tell if God will turn and forgive?"
(3:7-9.)

God saw that the people were truly sorry for their sins, and so He had mercy on them, and did not destroy them.

When Jonas saw that the Lord did not punish Ninive, he felt very bad. And he complained to God and said that was just why he had not wanted to go to Ninive in the first place, for he knew that as soon as the people would ask for mercy, God would forgive them, and then what would they think of him for telling them that they would be destroyed?

Then Jonas went outside the city and made himself a little shelter, and there he sat to see what would happen to the city.

And God caused an ivy to grow up over the head of Jonas and shade him. And he was very glad.

But the next morning God caused a worm to gnaw at the root of the ivy, and the ivy withered. And the sun rose and grew very hot and beat upon the head of Jonas, and he grieved over the loss of the ivy.

Then God spoke to Jonas and told him that he was sorrowful because the ivy, which he had neither planted nor made to grow, had died; with how much more reason then should He, the Lord, wish to spare a people whom He had made and for whom He had cared?

CHAPTER XIV

THE DEN OF LIONS

Once there was a little boy named Daniel. He was very good and very smart, and being a Jew, he knew how to pray to the true God. Now many little boys in those days, as nowadays, had never heard about God, for the people had turned their backs on their Creator, all except the Jews. The rest made gods for themselves out of wood and stone and iron and brass and silver and gold, and they bowed before them and offered them sacrifices, and asked them to cure them of their sicknesses and give them victory when they went to battle. This was very wrong and very silly, for how can a stick or stone help anyone?

Others called some of the animals, as cows and alligators and snakes, gods. They prayed to them and gave them fine things to eat on costly dishes.

One terrible god was called Moloch. He was hollowed out of iron and filled with fire. When the flames leaped high, they placed poor little babies in his arms. Then the awful arms dropped

the baby into the burning fire. They said that was the way Moloch ate little children, and that he liked them better than anything else.

One day the enemy came from Babylon and destroyed Jerusalem, and ruined the beautiful temple where the Jews prayed and offered sacrifices. Then they took all the men, women and children prisoners and carried them back to their own country. Thus Daniel and his playmates grew up in a strange land.

It so happened that the king of Babylon made an immense statue of gold, and when it was finished, he sent for all the great men in the country to come and see it. A large crowd gathered and a herald cried out that when the musicians played, all must fall on the ground and adore the golden statue, and that if any one refused, he would be thrown into the fiery furnace.

The musicians started, and all the people bowed down. But some one ran to the king and told him that three young Jews had refused to adore the statue. Then the king sent for them and told them that they would have to adore the statue. But the young men, who were friends of Daniel, told the king that it was wrong to adore



My God hath sent His angel, and hath shut up the mouths of the lions, and they have not hurt me.
(Dan. 7:22.)

a god made by men, and that they would only adore the one true God in Heaven, who was able to save them from the flames; and that even if He did not wish to do so, they would rather be burned to death than commit such an awful sin.

Then the king ordered the furnace to be made seven times hotter than usual. And the men threw pitch and dry wood into the furnace and cast the three young Jews into the burning fire. But flames shot out and burned up the men who threw them in.

And an angel came down from heaven and parted the flames and took care of God's three friends, so that a cool breeze seemed to blow about them, and their garments were not even scorched, nor was a hair of their heads singed, nor was even the smell of fire upon them.

And the king heard them singing in the midst of the flames, and praising God, and he was astonished and went to the door of the furnace and bade them come out. And the three young men came forth from the fire unhurt, and when the king saw how powerful their God was, he ordered all the people to honor the God the Jews honored:

As time went on, the king saw that there was no one in his whole kingdom like Daniel, and so he wanted to place him over all the rest. Now some of the nobles, seeing this, grew very jealous, and tried to think how they could hurt Daniel in the eyes of the king. But Daniel was so holy that they could not find a single wrong thing that he did. At last they settled on a plan and went to the king and asked him to make a law forbidding any one to pray or ask a favor from any god or man, except the king, for thirty days, and to say that if anyone disobeyed, he would be thrown to the lions. The king agreed and the law was passed.

When Daniel heard what had been done, he went up to his room, as usual, and kneeling with his face turned towards Jerusalem, he prayed with all his heart. Thus he prayed three times a day.

The nobles were watching to catch him, for they knew that this was what he would do. Then they went to the king and told him that Daniel had disobeyed the law and must be thrown into the lions' den. The king grew sad, for he loved Daniel, and all day, even until sunset, he planned

to save him from the hungry lions. But the nobles saw what the king was trying to do, and they told him that once he had made a law he had to keep it.

Then they brought Daniel and threw him into the den of lions, and placed a stone at the mouth of the den, and the king sealed the opening with his own ring so that no one could enter. Then he went home grieving, and his supper was put before him, but he could not eat, and all night he lay on his bed, but could not sleep. Very early in the morning he got up and hurried to the den and called: “‘Daniel, servant of the living God, hath thy God . . . been able . . . to deliver thee from the lions?’” (Dan. 6:20.)

And the answer came back: “‘O king, live forever: My God hath sent His angel and hath shut up the mouths of the lions, and they have not hurt me. . . .’

“Then was the king exceedingly glad for him, and he commanded that Daniel should be taken out of the den: and Daniel was taken out of the den, and no hurt was found in him, because he believed in his God. ¶

“And by the king’s commandment, those men

were brought that had accused Daniel: and they were cast into the lions' den, they and their children, and their wives: and they did not reach the bottom of the den, before the lions caught them, and broke all their bones in pieces." (21-24.)

"Now the Babylonians had an idol called Bel: and there were spent upon him every day twelve great measures of fine flour, and forty sheep, and sixty vessels of wine.

"The king also worshipped him, and went every day to adore him: but Daniel adored his God. And the king said to him: 'Why dost thou not adore Bel?'

"And he answered and said to him: 'Because I do not worship idols made with hands, but the living God, that created heaven and earth. . . .'

"And the king said to him: 'Doth not Bel seem to thee to be a living god? Seest thou not how much he eateth and drinketh every day?'

"Then Daniel smiled and said: 'O king, be not deceived: for this is but clay within and brass without, neither hath he eaten at any time.'" (Dan. 14:2-6.)

Then the king was angry, and he sent for the priests and told them that if they could not prove

that Bel ate the sheep and the flour and drank the wine they put before him every night, they must die; but that if they could prove it, Daniel must die.

Now there were seventy priests, besides their wives and children, and they told the king to place the wine and the flour and the sheep before Bel, whilst they went out, and to shut the door and seal it with his own ring; and that if when he came in the morning, he should find that the god had not eaten all, they would be willing to die.

The priests were not afraid, for they had a secret door under the table, and every night they stole in through it and ate up all the food.

When the priests had gone and the king had placed the food before the idol, Daniel had his servants sprinkle fine ashes over the floor. Then they fastened the door, and the king sealed it with his own ring, and they went home.

In the night the seventy priests and their wives and children came in through the secret door in the floor and ate and drank all that had been set before Bel.

And early in the morning the king came to the temple with Daniel, and the seal was unbroken,

so that he was sure that no one had entered. When they opened the door the king cried out that Bel was a great god, for he saw that all the food and wine were gone. But Daniel held the king back and told him to look carefully at the floor and see the footprints in the ashes. And the king was very angry, and said: “‘I see the footsteps of men, and women, and children. . . .’ Then he took the priests, and their wives, and their children: and they showed him the private doors by which they came in.” (14:19, 20.)

Therefore, the king put them to death and let Daniel destroy Bel and his temple.

And God loved Daniel very much, and told him of things that would happen in years to come, and among these was the year of the Redeemer’s birth.

CHAPTER XV

HE COMES

After many long years in a strange land, the Jews went back to Jerusalem. And the old men cried when they saw the place where the city had once stood, for they remembered how beautiful it had been when they were little boys, and the enemy had not yet come and torn it down.

But the Jews set to work and rebuilt the city and the temple, and then they waited for the Redeemer. Daniel had said that He would not come for nearly five hundred years, and Daniel was right.

At length there was born a little girl, and her name was Mary. As soon as God made her He adopted her by clothing her soul in sanctifying grace, and original sin, in which you and I were born, never touched her. She was very pretty, and God loved her so that He made her soul more and more beautiful day by day. And the little Mary loved God so that in all her life she never had the smallest spot of sin on her soul. She liked to work and she liked to play, but she liked most of all to pray.



"And they came with haste: and they found Mary and Joseph, and the Infant lying in the manger." (Luke ii, 16.)

When she was about fifteen years old, she married a holy man named Joseph. They were married in the temple of Jerusalem and then they went to live in a little town called Nazareth.

Joseph was a carpenter, and one day whilst he was busy in his shop, the blessed Mary, having finished her housework, was on her knees in prayer. All at once the room was filled with a heavenly light and, looking up, she saw an angel. He bowed his head and said to her: "Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women." (Luke 1:28.)

Mary wondered what the angel meant, and then he told her that the time had come for the Redeemer to be born, and that God wanted her to be His mother. Mary said that she was God's servant, and that what He wanted, she wanted. Then the angel left to carry her answer back to Heaven.

Nine months later, Mary and Joseph were ordered to Bethlehem, the city where David had lived, there to have their names registered, because they both belonged to the family of David. It was winter, the month of December, and the journey was a very long one, for Joseph had to

walk the whole way, whilst the Virgin Mary rode on their little donkey.

When they reached Bethlehem, they found the town filled with excitement, its narrow streets packed with strangers who also had come to give in their names and who were eager to find shelter before nightfall.

Joseph and Mary moved on with the crowd, stopping here and there to ask for lodgings. But as often as they asked, as often were they refused, for the people saw that they were poor, and either they had no room or wished to keep it for some one who could pay a better price.

As darkness fell, nearly every one had secured a place in which to sleep, whilst Joseph and Mary stood alone in the deserted streets. All worn out from their journey, they knew not where to turn. At last they left the little town that would not have them and found nearby, an open cave under a hill. A poor place, indeed, but better there than blown about by the cold wind in the lonely streets. An ox and an ass were tied in the back of the cave, but these would not turn them away as men had done. Here they made ready to rest.

O happy cave wherein was born that night the Redeemer of the world. O happy cave wherein the angels knelt with Mary and Joseph before the tiny Christ. While all was still and the world asleep, the little Saviour stepped from Heaven. In the silence of midnight came the King. His throne the manger from which the ox was fed, His robes poor swaddling clothes, His kingdom, Mary's heart.

And Mary kissed her little Son and knelt before Him, for He was God. God the Son, the second person of the Blessed Trinity, had come from Heaven to take Mary for His mother and be born a little child that He might open Heaven for us all. This was the Redeemer of whom God had spoken to Adam and Eve, to Abraham, to David, and to Daniel. This was the reason why Mary had been born in sanctifying grace, and had always been free from sin because she was to be God's mother when God became man.

And Joseph was pure and holy too, but he had been born like us in original sin, for he was not the Child's real father, only God, the Father, was that.

And that night angels appeared to some shep-

herds who were guarding their sheep on the hillside, and told them to be glad for the Saviour of the world had just been born. Then the angels sang some of the sweetest songs they had learned in Heaven, and the shepherds caught these words: "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to men of good will." (Luke 2:14.)

When the angels had gone and the hillside again lay in darkness, the shepherds hurried to the cave where they found the Child as the angels had said. They fell on their knees about the manger and gazed on that beautiful little face, whilst Mary told them that that tiny Infant was the God of Heaven and earth, who had left His throne of splendor to be born a little boy, so that when He grew up He might win the hearts of men and, by dying, open for all the gates of Heaven.

And the shepherds thought that He need not wait till He grew up to have their hearts, for they were already breaking with love for Him who loved them so much.

And when the Child was eight days old He was given the name of Jesus. It is a name so holy that when any one speaks it, the angels in

Heaven bow down, and even the devils in hell tremble and bend. We too should bow our head every time we say the word, or hear it said. Often during the day, and when we waken at night, let us say the sweet name, *Jesus*.

We call the Redeemer by other names than Jesus, as the Saviour, Christ, our Lord. But by them all we mean the second Person of the Blessed Trinity, who was always God and became man when He made Mary His mother.

CHAPTER XVI

THE THREE KINGS

For a long, long time the Jews had known from God that on the night of Christ's birth a new star would rise in the sky. Now far in the East lived a people who knew little or nothing about the true God, but who studied the heavens very carefully and made maps of the sky as it looks at night and named the stars and marked those that change their places and those that seem to stand still.

These people had heard from the Jews about the new star that would shine on the night in which the Redeemer would be born. Year after year they had watched for it, and year after year they had been disappointed. But, lo! on the night of Christ's dear birth, as the men of the East looked into the skies, there suddenly blazed forth a star that had never shone before. The wise men held their breath and gazed. They were afraid to turn away, for the star might leave as quickly as it had come. But steadily it threw its rays upon them. Could it mean that the

Savior, the King, Who could answer all the questions that burned in their souls, was born this night? They called out one to the other, their hands trembled as they unrolled the maps, their eyes dimmed with tears as they searched for this star and found it not. "The King has come," they cried. "Let us go and look for Him. O happy that we are to be alive tonight. He will tell us what we have longed to know. He will tell us about God, about Heaven, about our souls. Let us lose no time."

They hurried to their homes, awoke their wives and children, showed them the new star in the heavens, and packed their things for the journey.

But when they met as they had agreed, to follow the star until they found the King, one said that his wife and children would not let him leave, and another said that his neighbors told him that he could do nothing more foolish than to follow a star. Only a few had the courage to start, and as they left with their train of camels and servants, the people watched them until they were lost in a cloud of dust, and then, shaking their heads, they went home.



And opening their treasures, they offered him gifts; gold, frankincense, and myrrh. (Matt. 2:11.)

Week after week the star led them across burning deserts, amid cool forests, and through running streams. One after the other, losing heart, turned back, until only three were left. Great men these three, who thought it nothing to spend the rest of their lives searching for the King if only they might find Him in the end.

At last the star brought them to Jerusalem and then disappeared. The wise men guided their camels through the busy streets, asking for the King of the Jews Who had just been born.

"What do you mean?" said the people. "Herod is our king, but he is old and no child has been born lately in his palace. Many are the persons he has killed, and we wish we could get rid of him. He is not even a Jew like us and does not believe in the one true God; but our enemies beat us in war and made him our king."

Still the wise men insisted that the king, who had been so long expected, had just been born. "For," they said, "we have seen His star in the East, and are come to adore Him." (Matt. 2, 2.)

Then the people grew excited and asked one another whether it were possible that the Redeemer had come. Even Herod heard of the

disturbance and sent for the wise men and questioned them about the Child and the exact night in which they had first seen the star. Then he called the Jewish priests and asked them where their Redeemer would be born, and they said, "In Bethlehem." (Verse 5.) So the king told the wise men to go and find the Child and then bring back word so that he, too, might go and adore Him. The three kings left at night and as soon as they were away from the city, the star again shone to lead them on.

But Herod had no wish to adore the Child and only wanted to find Him that he might kill Him, for he did not want the Jews to have any king but himself.

Guided by the star, the kings at last found the little Christ in His mother's arms. They fell down before Him and offered Him their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And Mary told them that the little Savior was not only the King of the Jews but the King of the whole world and the King of Heaven, for He was God.

And the wise men so loved the beautiful Child and His mother that they wanted to spend the rest of their lives near them. But when they

decided to carry the good news back to their own people, God told them in their sleep not to go home through Jerusalem, for Herod wished to know where the Child was only that he might kill Him. So they took a different road.

Herod waited and waited, and when the wise men did not come, he grew very angry and made up his mind that he would kill the Child any way. So he ordered his soldiers to go through all the houses in the land and kill every little boy under two years of age. The poor mothers cried and screamed and clung to their babies with all their strength. But the soldiers jerked them from their arms and ran their swords through them.

During the night an angel came and awoke Joseph and told him that Herod wanted to kill the Child and that therefore he must hurry with Him and His mother to the land of Egypt and stay there until he told him to come back.

Mary and Joseph had no time to close up their house or to say good-bye to their friends, but as soon as God sent them word, they got right up and, with the help of their faithful donkey, started for Egypt. It was a lonely journey



Who arose, and took the Child and His mother by night, and retired into Egypt. (Matt. 2:14.)

in the darkness of night and many a time the beast shied at the strange black shadows that fell across their path. But they had no fear, for the little Child, nestled in Mary's arms, was their protector.

After three days they came into the land of Egypt. Here they settled down among a strange people so different from themselves, who adored many gods and whose language they could not understand. Here the Infant Jesus learned to say His first words and to take His first steps and later to run and to play.

Herod died in terrible suffering that no medicine could cure, and then the angel came to Joseph and told him to go back to his own country. At once the holy family left and went to Nazareth, where they lived among their friends once more.

CHAPTER XVII

LOST IN THE TEMPLE

Every year the Jews from far and near used to gather at Jerusalem to keep the great Feast of the Passover. For one week the city was so packed that it was difficult to walk in the streets, and those who came after all the houses were filled had to pitch their tents in the fields or on the roadside. Great herds of oxen and flocks of sheep were driven into the city and up to the temple. Here they were sold as victims for the sacrifices and filled the air with bellowing and bleating.

Each family bought a lamb to take home, and on a certain night, if less than ten, invited a number of guests to eat with them the lamb of the Passover. The animal was killed and placed on two branches of a pomegranate tree, which does not easily burn. One branch ran through the whole length of the body and the second and shorter one crossed the breast, holding the forelegs straight out so that the lamb lay in the shape of a cross. This had to be done very care-

fully, for if any one broke the smallest bone, he was punished with forty strokes of a whip. Then the lamb was roasted and placed on the table with wild parsley and bitter herbs and bread like a thin dry paste, for it was made of flour and water only. And the father of the family mixed water and wine in a cup which was passed around so that each one might drink a little. And the lamb was carved and every bit of it had to be eaten. Then all sang prayers to God.

When Jesus was twelve years old, He went to Jerusalem to keep for the first time the Feast of the Passover. It was a week of much praying and of great joy, and when it was over, the city was turned upside down with the excitement of leaving friends and relatives and gathering up bundles and packing camels and mules and forming traveling groups, for people from the same city journeyed together. The men left by one gate and the women by another, but after a certain distance they came together. Children could go with either father or mother. St. Joseph fell in with a group of men going to Nazareth and, though he knew most of them, he longed



And all that heard Him were astonished at His wisdom and His answers. (Luke 2:47.)

to be with Jesus and His Mother. And the Blessed Virgin sorely missed our Lord, but never doubted that He was with St. Joseph. In the evening when they met, they found that the Child had not been with either of them. Where was He? They forgot that they were tired and hungry and at once turned back. They asked each band of travelers on the way whether they had seen their Son. "How old is He?" "Twelve years old." "What does He look like?" "He looks just like His mother," said St. Joseph, pointing to the Blessed Virgin. "No, we have not seen Him." On they pressed until it grew so dark that it was useless to continue. So they laid down on the bare ground, but could not sleep for thinking what could have happened to Jesus. How could they have lost Him? When they were getting ready to leave Jerusalem, He was with them. Could He have got in with a caravan starting for some far-off city? Could wicked men have stolen Him? Could He have been crushed in the crowd and badly hurt? Oh, where and how was He spending that night? And, most terrible thought of all, was it through carelessness on their part that He

was lost? Yet they could not see that they had been careless.

In the gray of early morning, they were again on the road, and by noon had reached Jerusalem. Up one street, down another, ever asking the same questions, ever getting the same answers, when night came they had found no trace of Him.

At last on the third day, they climbed the marble steps of the temple. In one of the great halls, the most learned of the Jews used to gather to talk over things in the Bible, and a crowd of strangers had stayed after the Feast to listen to the wise things that were said. A number of boys were sitting on the floor trying to catch what they could, for there were no schools in those days and this was their only chance to learn. But one of the boys was standing and, instead of listening, was talking, and a hush was over that great crowd and all strained their ears to catch His words, for never had a child been heard to speak like this one.

The clever Jewish doctors saw that He knew more than the wisest man among them, and they stroked their long white beards and shook their

snowy locks and asked: "Who is this Boy? Where does He come from?" And some one answered: "He comes from Nazareth. He is the Son of Joseph the carpenter." At this they were puzzled more than ever, for if He was a poor carpenter's son and lived in the little town of Nazareth, He had never studied. Then where could He have learned all He knew? Again they spoke to the Child and tried to catch Him with the hardest questions they knew. But He answered every one so clearly that they marvelled all the more. Then He asked *them* some questions, but they frowned and bit their lips and jerked their long robes about their knees, for, try as they would, they could not answer.

And the Boy fearlessly spoke on in His clear, high voice, and showed them that it was time for the Redeemer to come, that He had come and that though they could not understand how He knew all things, it was because He Himself was the Savior who had come to teach them about His Heavenly Father and to save their souls.

Just then two sad, worn figures stopped in the doorway and looked in. O the relief, the joy

that came into their faces! The Child turned and saw them and ran to them and threw Himself in His Mother's arms, and she cried out: "Son, why hast Thou done so to us? Behold Thy father and I have sought Thee sorrowing. (Luke 2:48.) And He asked in surprise: "How is it that you sought Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?" (Verse 49.) Yes, this had been His time to let the Jews know that the Redeemer had come and much as He loved His Mother and much as it hurt Him to make her sad, He had first to look to the work His heavenly Father wanted Him to do. But could He not have told them where He was going, so that they would not worry? Yes, and He would have, had He not had some good reason for not doing so. But Mary and Joseph would not now give up that three days' sorrow for anything in the world; for now they see the reason of it, now they see that it was best, now they see that they were not careless but that God let them suffer so that He might draw them all the closer to Himself in Heaven.

So, too, God still lets men and women, boys

and girls, suffer many things, and often they cannot see the reason why. Some silly persons say: "I don't see why God let that man die. His children need him so badly"; or, "I don't see why God lets that good woman have so much trouble"; or, "I don't see why God lets me suffer so much." But wise persons say: "God has let this trouble come, so it must be for the best. And though I cannot now see why, some day I shall."

Then Jesus left the temple with His Mother and St. Joseph, whilst the crowd watched in wonder. Soon, in little groups, they too left the hall, talking excitedly about the Boy from Nazareth.

O what happiness for Mary and Joseph to have Jesus with them once more and what happiness for Jesus to be again with the two persons He loved best. And He told them where He had been and what He had done and how He missed them during those sad three days and that He never could have left them had it not been the will of His heavenly Father. Their hearts were so filled with joy that the journey seemed very short, and they were not a bit tired when they caught the first sight of their little cottage

in Nazareth. There life was again just what it had been, whilst month by month Jesus grew taller and stronger and, it almost seemed, more beautiful, and He learned the trade of His foster-father and helped him in his work. Yet all these years He was obedient to Mary and Joseph.

And every boy and girl must be obedient to his parents, too. This is often very hard, but you are strong and like to do hard things, and you can just think a moment of the Child Jesus and say: "All for Thee, dear Jesus," and then set about doing what your father or mother want you to do. And you will be much happier and God will love and bless you for it. Some children think it is smart to talk back to their parents and to say "I won't," and sometimes they think they know even more than their parents know. But nice boys and girls do not act like this. They are polite to their father and mother and try to help them and, when they go to school, they obey their teachers, too.

Unless your parents should tell you to do something wrong, as to steal or to tell a lie, you must always obey them. God is very particular about this and every time you disobey them or are

rude to them, He sees you and will punish you for it.

When you go to church, thank our Lord for giving you your parents, ask Him to bless them and to make you obedient to them.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE LAME WALK

What is all the noise and confusion about this morning? See the crowds streaming through the streets of the little town. And those left at home are leaning out of their windows, shading their eyes, and looking into the distance where a white, dusty road runs from the town through fields and over hills. The crowd is going in the same direction and clear down that road what seemed a tiny speck is growing bigger and bigger. Yes, it is another crowd coming this way, and in the center walks a Man in long white garments that flutter in the breeze. You can just catch the echo of the shout that goes up when the two crowds meet. Now they are all moving this way and boys and men are running ahead, waving branches of palm and clearing a path for the Figure in white. Hear the glad "Hosannas" they are singing. They are entering the city now, and no sooner do the people in the windows see through which street the procession will pass than they hurry inside and quickly the

road is lined with another crowd who have carried thither all their sick.

See the old blind man in front of that house. He is asking what all the excitement is about, and they tell him: "Jesus of Nazareth is passing by." At once he shouts with all his might: "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" They tell him to hold his tongue, but he cries out the more: "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" And lo! Jesus steps from the road and goes up to the blind man and lays His hands on his eyes, and when He takes them away, the blind man can see, and the whole crowd bursts like thunder into cries of "Hosanna! Hosanna to the Son of David!"

As Jesus steps back into the road, a poor mother blocks His way, and kneeling before Him, holds up in a ragged shawl her little child all wasted from fever. And Jesus takes the little creature in His arms and presses him to His heart, and when He gives him back to his mother, the child is well and laughs and claps his little hands. And there beneath a tree is a poor man stretched on a mattress. His friends have carried him, for he cannot move. Jesus sees him



And all that were sick He healed. (Matt. 8:16.)

now and speaks to him: "Arise and walk!" Look at him getting up and following with the crowd. And there is a little girl. She looks so sad and pale, for she can not walk. She is paralyzed and her father is carrying her in his arms. Jesus is talking to her now and laying His hand on her little shrunken legs. Will she be cured? Why, she is crying out that she is well, and her father is letting her stand on the ground, and away she goes, skipping and running.

Look at that poor old woman behind Jesus. She has been sick for many years. She does not want anyone to see her and she is pushing through the crowd on her hands and knees. There! she has caught the hem of His gown and pressed it to her lips. She knows she has been cured at once, for see the joy in her face as she slinks away.

And now they have come to the corner, and just down the side street a thin, white face watches from the window. Nobody sees it, and oh! how the boy wishes Jesus would look up. But Christ passes out of his sight and all hope is gone. The hot tears spatter on his cheeks when he hears a step on the stairs. He turns his head

and sees in the doorway a face of such beauty and such kindness that he cries out: "Jesus of Nazareth!" And Jesus comes in, for He heard the boy's prayer, and He leans over the little straw mattress and takes the small hot hand in His. And when He leaves the house, the boy runs by His side and stays close to Him all day, and scarcely can be made at night to go back to his home.

And now they have reached the edge of the town, and the crowd has gone wild with joy and follows Jesus out into the fields, where, sitting on a low hill, He talks to them of His heavenly Father and tells them what they must do to get to Heaven. There is such sweetness and such power in His words that they forget everything else, and when at last the sun has set in the west, Jesus has to send them home. And he stays alone to spend the whole night praying to His Father for us all. And in the morning, He rises from His knees and starts off once more to cure the bodies and the souls of the poor people in some other little town.

CHAPTER XIX

THE CHILDREN'S FRIEND

For three years Jesus walked from town to town, teaching the people and curing all the sick. He was thirty years old when He left His home in Nazareth, gave up His carpenter's trade and said good-bye to His dear Mother. Not that He did not often see her after that, for whenever He passed that way, He always went to her, and she often followed Him on His journeys. St. Joseph had died some time before. It was scarcely like dying to have Jesus and Mary at his bedside. But it was hard for Jesus to leave His Mother all alone. Still He had other work to do—He had the world to save. So He gathered about Him a number of poor men, mostly ignorant fishermen,—Peter and his brother Andrew, John and his brother James and eight others. These men left their trades and their homes, happy to be with Jesus day and night. Who would not be? They saw the wonderful things He did and listened to His words, and they fell so deeply in love with Him that they were ready to die for His sake, all of them

but one. Jesus spent many long hours teaching them so that they would be able to go into the cities and preach in His place. These twelve men were called His Apostles.

Shall we follow Jesus again and see what He does? It is the Sabbath-day and He is just going into the synagogue or Jewish church. The place is crowded to the doors and all have heard of His wonderful deeds. Jesus walks into their midst and takes the speaker's chair. There is not a sound as He raises His voice. They hold their breath and lean forward to catch every word.

A poor man has pushed his way in and for a while he, too, is spellbound. Suddenly there is a terrific scream and a devil inside the man cries out: "Let us alone; what have we to do with Thee, Jesus of Nazareth? Art Thou come to destroy us? I know Thee, who Thou art, the Holy One of God." (Luke 4:34.) At once Jesus stands over the man and says to the devil who has long tortured him: "Hold thy peace, and go out of him." (35.) One last cry breaks out and the devil, throwing the man on the floor, flees. The man gets up unhurt and perfectly cured.

The people are frightened and talk among themselves and ask how it is that the devil obeys the least word from Christ.

And now Jesus is leaving the synagogue and is on His way to Peter's house, for the mother of Peter's wife is very sick with a fever. They do not think she can live, and the house is filled with friends. They make room for Jesus and He goes up to the bed and takes the poor old woman's bony hand in His and at once the fever leaves and she gets up strong and well and prepares dinner for Jesus and His friends.

The news of these things quickly spreads through the town. It is evening, the sun is just setting, and the people are coming from all directions to Peter's house. The crowd outside the door is growing bigger and bigger. The whole space in front of the house is covered with the deaf and dumb, the blind, the lame, the paralyzed, those suffering from any kind of disease, even those possessed by devils. They are calling now for Jesus of Nazareth. They beg Him to come out and cure them.

At last the door opens and Jesus stands on the threshold in the golden light of the sunset. He



"Come to Me, all you that labour and are burdened, and I will refresh you." (Matt. 11:28.)

looks for a moment over that great crowd waiting in silence now, and His heart is touched and His eyes fill with tears as He sees their sufferings. Then he steps down among them, speaking words of comfort, laying His sacred hands on their poor bodies until far into the night. Indeed, morning is breaking over the hills when He sends the last one home, happy and well.

Without a moment's rest, Jesus passes alone down the empty streets of the sleeping town, then out through the fields wet with dew, until He comes to a desert place where He can pray in quiet.

But the people wake up and hurry to Peter's house, looking for Jesus. When they find He is not there, they scatter and search for him everywhere. Peter knows how Jesus loves to get away from the city's noise and spend hours praying in some lonely spot. Ah! here he comes. He has caught sight of the kneeling Figure he loves, and hurries up to tell Jesus that every one is looking for Him. But Jesus tells him that He must go on to other cities, so that their people may hear Him, too. Oh, dear! here's the crowd already. They were right on Peter's heels, and

now they surround Jesus and beg Him to stay with them. But he tells them that He can not do so, for He must be about His Father's business.

Again it is early morning, and Jesus stands on the shore of the lake watching the Apostles wash their nets, for they have been out on the water all night without catching a single fish. And here is a crowd, too, come to hear Jesus speak. And he steps into Peter's boat and tells them to pull out a little from the shore, and then He talks to the people.

When he has finished, He says to Peter: "Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught." (Luke 5:4.) And he answers: "Master, we have labored all the night, and have taken nothing: but at Thy word, I will let down the net." (Verse 5.) There! the net is slipping into the water, but see it strain and pull. Peter grabs it and feels how heavy it is. Why, it is bursting with fish and he can not draw it up. Hear him calling to his partners in the other boat. He is asking them to come and help. Here they are, all excited, for they have caught nothing. Now they pull together with all their

strength. The net is breaking, but they land it and fill both their boats with the fish.

They are struck with fear and wonder at the power of Jesus, and Peter falls on his knees before Him.

And now Jesus is just going into that little town and here comes a poor man. He falls at Jesus' feet, crying: "Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean." (Luke 5:12.) How dares he come close to Jesus, for he is a leper and his body is covered with sores? Leprosy is the most awful disease he can have. It begins with the hands and feet and spreads over the whole body, which, little by little, falls to pieces. No sooner is a man or woman found to have it than he is torn from his family and thrown out into the wilderness to suffer and die alone. And the law forbids the lepers to enter the gates of any city. They must not even drink the water of the streams flowing into the towns, and when they see anyone coming near them they must warn him from the distance by crying out: "Unclean! Unclean!"

How has this leper dared to break the law? How can he have heard of Jesus? Yet there he



And when a very great multitude was gathered together, and hastened out of the cities unto Him, He spoke. (Luke 8:4.)

is, risking all, for he is certain that Christ can cure him. At once Jesus puts His hands on his ugly sores and says: "I will. Be thou cleansed." (Luke 5:13.) Immediately the leprosy leaves, the diseased body is sound and well, the flush of health is in his face, and he gets up, no longer an outcast, but able to go back to the home he thought he would never see again, able to go where he will and to live once more among his friends.

And now look over there. Jesus is climbing a steep hill up to the little city of Naim. Through the gates of the town a funeral procession is just passing and coming towards Him. Hear the shrill notes of the flute-players who lead the way. Just behind are the relatives carrying the dead body of a young man wrapped in perfumes and linens. See the poor mother! She is crying bitterly, for she is a widow and the young man was her only son. The mourners are wild with grief, wailing and moaning and striking their breasts. The sad sight touches the heart of Jesus, and going up to the poor mother, He says: "Weep not!" (Luke 7:13.)

The procession stops, the flute-players are still

and the women hush their sobs. Jesus stands by the side of the body and in the silence His voice rings out: "Young man, I say to thee, arise!" (Verse 14.) And he that was dead sits up and begins to talk, and Jesus passes on, leaving them in fear and joy and crying out: "A great prophet is risen up among us: and God hath visited His people." (Verse 16.)

Once more Jesus is surrounded by a crowd. They have been asking Him questions, and now He is watching a group of women bringing their children for Him to bless. The Apostles are angry when they see them, for they do not want to be interrupted, and they turn to the women and tell them to take their babies home and not to bother the Master. But Jesus hears them and will not let them send the children away, for he loves them especially, and He says to the Apostles: "Suffer the little children, and forbid them not to come to Me: for the Kingdom of Heaven is for such." (Matt. 19: 14.) Taking the children in His arms, He blesses them whilst the Apostles are surprised to see Him show them such love. Then Jesus passes on to bless and cure others who do not know Him yet.

CHAPTER XX.

THE LAST SUPPER

Jesus had spent three years among the people, walking from town to town, healing and teaching. And now another Feast of the Passover was about to commence and the whole country was excited over a miracle Jesus had just performed. A short distance from Jerusalem, in the little town of Bethany, lived three of Jesus' dear friends—Martha and Mary and their brother Lazarus. But Lazarus had died and in great sorrow his sisters buried him. In their grief Jesus came, asked them to show Him the grave and, surrounded by a crowd of Jews, called to the dead Lazarus to come forth. And Lazarus came, alive and well.

The people were wild with excitement, wonder and joy. They gathered close about the man they had buried four days before. They feasted their eyes upon him, spoke to him, touched him. Then they went home, spreading the news over all the land.

Many came to Jerusalem for the Feast in the



And presently he that had been dead came forth, bound feet and hands with winding bands. (John 11:44.)

hopes of seeing Christ when they heard how He had raised Lazarus to life. As the crowds gathered in the porches of the temple, the name of Jesus was in every mouth. Not seeing Him, they asked on all sides: "Where is He?" "Think you He will come for the Feast?" But He was spending these days far from the crowds, in prayer.

The Jewish priests knit their brows and bit their lips to find the people thus inquiring for Christ. They hated Him because they were jealous of Him, and they would gladly have killed Him if they could have done so unnoticed.

At last on Sunday, Jesus left the desert and took the road to Jerusalem, there to die. He knew he was going to His death and that in a few days He would be killed. St. Peter begged Him to stay away from Jerusalem, but He went there on purpose to give up His life for you and me.

As He neared the city with His Apostles and Lazarus at His side, an immense crowd gathered about Him. He rode on an ass and the men threw their coats on the animal for Him to sit upon and strewed green branches from the

trees upon the road before Him. And they waved palm branches in the air and sang "Hosanna to the Son of David," for they were carried away at sight of Lazarus. And word reached Jerusalem that Christ was coming to celebrate the Feast and that Lazarus was with Him. At once the crowds rushed out and when they had met Him and had seen Lazarus with their own eyes, they turned and led the way back to the city.

It was evening when the procession passed in triumph through the streets of Jerusalem. Then it broke up; and Jesus, knowing that the Jewish priests would gladly seize Him in the night and do away with Him, went out to the lonely hillsides and slept on the bare ground.

Monday and Tuesday He returned to the temple, where he cured all the sick and taught the listening crowds. Wednesday He kept away from the city, and Thursday morning, the Apostles, knowing how full of danger Jerusalem was for Him, asked where He would eat the lamb of the Passover. But Jesus told Peter and John to go into the city and there in a certain house to get all things ready, for that evening He would join them for the supper.

Peter and John found the owner of the house, who showed them a large room that they might use. They then went to the temple and picked out a lamb which they carried to the priest. And he killed the lamb and let its blood flow over the altar. Then they brought it home and had it roasted with two pomegranate branches holding the body in the shape of a cross. They also bought wild lettuce and parsley and unleavened bread, which is a thin dry paste of flour and water.

Judas, one of the twelve Apostles, had carefully listened that morning to all Jesus said. He made sure of His plans, where He would eat the lamb of the Passover and where he would later go to pray. Then he watched his chance, slipped away from the others, and hurried to find the Jewish priests. When these had come together, Judas excitedly told them that if they wanted to seize Jesus and put Him to death, he would show them where they could find Him that night whilst the city slept. At first the priests thought that Judas was laying a trap for them. They knew how the Apostles loved their Master, and they could not believe that one of them would



And they that went before and they that followed, cried, saying: "Hosanna, blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord!" (Mark 11:9.)

turn traitor and lead Him to death. But as Judas went on rapidly talking and said how He was tired of following Jesus, of tramping up and down the country, of often going hungry, of hearing Christ talk of the greatness of being poor and of suffering, they began to believe he was in earnest. And when Judas asked how much they would pay him, and when they saw the gleam in his eye and the eagerness with which he snatched up the thirty pieces of silver they tossed to him, they knew he would keep his bargain.

Judas told them that he would wait for them at midnight at the gate of the Garden of Olives.

There was a murmur of voices as the traitor left the room. The Jewish priests exclaimed: "Poor fool! Had he been sharper, he could have gotten twice the money. But how easily it was done! No trouble to ourselves! We never dreamed that all the silver in the land could buy over one of the Twelve! This time tomorrow, 'twill all be over, the people will stop their craze, and we can rest in peace." And they chuckled to themselves.

As evening drew on Judas, clutching his bag of silver, caught up with the Apostles as they

followed Jesus into the supper-room. They all seemed so quiet and so sad. "Yet surely," he thought, "they can not know what I have done! Oh, no! They would have fallen upon me and killed me, had they known." Nevertheless, he kept as far away from Jesus as he could. He was afraid to have His eye rest upon him, for he felt that He could read his heart. As he looked at Christ's gentle figure, the thought rushed into his mind to fall at His feet and tell Him what he had done and warn Him not to go near the garden that night. Then the devil whispered to him: "Even if Christ would forgive you, what would the eleven think? They would always shrink from you. And you could not stand the hatred of the priests. They might even kill you. No, it is too late!"

As they were eating the supper, the Apostles looked at Jesus and were astonished to see the change that had come into His sacred face. He looked so pale, so tired, so sorrowful! Ah! the fear of death was upon Him! He knew what Judas had done, He knew that this was the last time He would eat with His Apostles before His death, He knew all that He would suffer.

At last Jesus said: "One of you is about to betray me." (Matt. 26:21.) Like a knife the words cut into the heart of Judas. He saw that Jesus knew what he had done. The others had no suspicions, and each one cried out in terror: "Is it I, Lord?" (Verse 22.) Like an echo, Judas repeated: "Is it I, Lord?" (Verse 25.) Jesus said to him: "Thou hast said it." (Verse 25.) But the others did not catch the words, and Peter whispered to John, who was next to Christ: "Who is it of whom He speaketh?" (John 13:29.) John, "leaning on the breast of Jesus, saith to Him: 'Lord, who is it?'" (Verse 25.) "Jesus answered: 'He it is to whom I shall reach bread dipped.'" (Verse 26.) Then Jesus, taking a piece of bread, dipped it in the platter and handed it to Judas. Even then Peter and John did not understand, but Judas saw that it would not be safe for him to stay. Again he thought: "Shall I tell all and save Jesus' life? There is still time. What if they do throw me out or even kill me?" Again the devil whispered: "Too late. Your sin is too great."

Then Jesus said to him: "That which thou



And whilst they were at supper, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and broke; and gave to His disciples, and said: "Take ye and eat. This is My Body."
And taking the chalice, He gave thanks, and gave to them, saying: "Drink ye all of this. For this is My Blood." (Matt. 26:26-28.)

dost, do quickly." (Verse 27.) At once Judas got up and fled into the night.

Supper was now over and there was left on the table some unleavened bread and a cup of wine. No one spoke, but all watched Jesus to see what He would do or say.

Then Jesus, taking the unleavened bread in His hands and looking up to Heaven, blessed it, broke it, and gave it to His Apostles, saying: "Take ye and eat. This is My Body." (Matt. 26:26.) At that instant the bread was changed into Christ's Body and the Apostles ate not bread but the Sacred Flesh of Christ.

Then taking the cup of wine, Jesus blessed it and gave it to them, saying: "Drink ye all of This, for This is My Blood." (Verses 27, 28.) At that instant, the wine in the cup was changed into the Blood of Christ and the Apostles drank not wine but the precious Blood of Christ.

This was the way Jesus had chosen of getting into their hearts. The night before He died, He wanted to be closer to them than He had ever been before. He was going to leave them and He knew they would be lonely, so He told them that although He was going to Heaven,

He would come to them and that as He had changed bread and wine into His Body and Blood, so He now gave them the power to do the same, and thus they could receive Him into their hearts every day.

But many others would want to have Jesus with them, too, and so Christ told them that every man that was made a priest in His Church would have the power to change bread and wine into His Body and Blood. And thus under the form of bread, Jesus would live on the altar with His people until the end of the world.

When the Apostles received the Body and Blood of Jesus that Thursday night at the Last Supper, they made their First Communion. And when you make your First Communion you will receive the Body and Blood of Jesus, too.

Oh, try to learn how to make your First Communion as soon as you can. Beg our Lord to come to you quickly and often say this little prayer: "Come, Lord Jesus, delay no longer."

CHAPTER XXI

HOW HEAVEN WAS OPENED

When the Last Supper was over, Jesus led the Eleven out across the little brook Cedron, of whose waters He stooped and drank, into the Garden of Olives. The pale moonlight rested on the fields and hillsides, but underneath the leafy olive trees, the shadows lay gloomy and black. The Apostles were sleepy and Jesus told them to lie down whilst He went deeper into the garden to pray. How could they sleep when they saw how heavy His heart was and when they had heard Him say that He would be betrayed? But they seldom understood His words.

Oh, how Jesus prayed and suffered that night! He would soon be dead and He knew it. It was for this He had been born and lived for thirty-three years. He had left Heaven and come into the world that He might die for us, and by dying, open Heaven and save us from hell. He had offered His Father to suffer for all our sins, so that we might go free. Never can anyone love us as Jesus does!



"Father, if Thou wilt, remove this chalice from Me; but yet not My will but Thine be done." (Luke 22:42.)

And as He prayed He saw coming towards Him a mighty ocean of sins. It was made up of every sin that had ever been committed and that ever would be committed. Every country, every city, every village, every house, every man, woman, and child, poured a stream of sin into that sea. The roar of its billows—all the swearing and cursing and bad words of the world—was in His ears. The smell of its waters filled with lies and thefts and murders and disobediences and every filthy sin, was in His nostrils.

Closer and closer it rolled. Its waves rose like mountains in the air and threatened His very life. Jesus was alone against that raging flood. Would no one come to help Him? He shuddered and would have fled, but He had come into the world to take away its sea of sin. He would stand firm for our sakes. He prayed to His Father: "Father, if it be possible, let this chalice pass from Me. Nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt." (Matt. 26, 39.)

Oh, turn away your eyes! The sea has broken over Him. Its dirty, reeking waters have dragged Him into their foul depths. He can not



And Jesus said to him: "Judas, dost thou betray the Son of Man with a kiss?" (Luke 22:48.)

breathe. His spotless soul is drenched with sin. He gasps and struggles to free Himself.

After three hours, Jesus staggers to His feet, bathed in His own blood from the fierceness of the struggle.

O Jesus, dearest Lord, all this for me! Oh, let me wipe the blood from Thy tear-stained face! I never knew before that my sins did this to Thee! Oh, never will I commit them again!

Weak and trembling, Jesus makes His way through the darkness to His Apostles. He wakes them and tells them that His enemies have come for Him. Even as He speaks, they see a band of men approaching with lighted lanterns and torches and clubs, and at their head walks Judas. The traitor goes up to Christ, lays his bloody hands on His shoulders and kisses Him! The gentle Jesus tries once more to keep the soul of Judas out of hell. He calls him His friend and says: "Judas, dost thou betray the Son of Man with a kiss?" (Luke 22, 48.) But there is no pity, no love in the heart of Judas. Nothing can touch him.

The men then laid hold of Jesus and led Him off. The Apostles were frightened and ran



And the Lord turning, looked on Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, as He had said :
"Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny Me thrice." (Luke 22:61.)

away. "But Peter followed Him afar off, even to the court of the high priest. And going in he sat with the servants that he might see the end."

(Matt. 26, 58.)

"And one of the servants said to him: 'Thou also wast with Jesus.'" (Matt. 26, 69.) But Peter declared he did not know what she said. "And as he went out of the gate, another maid saw him and she saith to them that were there: 'This man also was with Jesus of Nazareth.'

"And again he denied with an oath: 'I know not the Man.'

"And after a little while, they came that stood by and said to Peter: 'Surely thou also art one of them. . . .'

"Then he began to curse and to swear that he knew not the Man. And immediately the cock crew." (Matt. 26:71-74.)

And Jesus, passing, turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembered that Jesus had said to him: "'Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny Me thrice.'

"And Peter going out, wept bitterly." (Luke 22:61, 62.)

And as long as he lived, Peter wept for his



And they began to accuse Him, saying: "We have found this Man perverting our nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, and saying that He is Christ the King." (Luke 23 :2.)

sin. To think that when Jesus was in trouble, he was afraid to have it known that he was His friend; when Jesus was going to His death, he kept away and swore he did not know Him.

Suddenly, into a room, where some of the priests had gathered, burst a man with blood-shot eyes and wild flying hair. He threw on the floor thirty pieces of silver, screaming: "I have sinned in betraying innocent blood." (Matt. 27:4.) Then out he dashed, out beyond the city, up a rocky hillside, on whose summit stood a lonely dead tree. He dragged a rope over the stones. He was mad with sin. Panting for breath, he stood and plucked at the rope. O Judas, stop! Great is thy sin, but Jesus' heart is greater. One word, one sigh of sorrow and He will forgive thee. He will throw thy sin behind His back and never think of it again. Even now He is giving His life for thee. But Judas would not be sorry. His soul was black with despair. Another moment and there dangled from the branches of the dead tree, the lifeless body of the traitor, whose guilty soul was already buried in the flames of hell.

Then they took Jesus to the Roman judge



Pilate therefore went forth again, and saith to them: "Behold, I bring Him forth unto you, that you may know that I find no cause in Him." (John 19:4.)

named Pontius Pilate, and asked him to sentence Him to death. Pilate said: "Why? What crime has He committed?" They answered: "He says He is the Son of God."

Pilate could find no reason for killing Jesus, but seeing that the priests were bound to have Him die, and that the crowd in the street outside was shouting for His death, and growing greater and greater, for it was now daylight, he told them that if they wished, they might give Him forty strokes with a whip on His bare shoulders.

So Jesus was dragged into an open court-yard and tied to a pillar. They pulled off His garments and strong, Roman soldiers cut and lashed and tore His sacred body with whips until they were tired out.

Then they threw an old purple gown about Him, and making Him sit down, forced into His head a crown of long sharp thorns. The blood blinded His eyes and burst from His mouth and ears.

O Jesus, if only I could have taken those cruel thorns out of Thy sacred head! And my sins helped to make that crown! Oh, never will I sin again!



And bearing His own cross, He went forth to that place which is called Calvary. (John 19:17.)

Then they dragged Jesus back to the hall, where Pilate sat. He was shocked when he saw what they had done to Christ. That beautiful face was covered with blood and those sacred feet tracked blood even to the judgment-seat. He led Him onto the porch so that the people might see Him and be touched at the sight. But the priests had roused the mob to madness, and the very ones, who five days before, had sung: "Hosanna to the Son of David," now shouted: "Crucify Him! Crucify Him! Kill Him! Nail Him to a cross!"

Pilate asked for a basin of water, and washing his hands before all the people, cried out: "I am innocent of the blood of this just Man!" (Matt. 27:24.) But they shouted back: "His blood be upon us and upon our children!" (Verse 25.)

O weak, guilty judge, to give Jesus over to the fury of the mob! They dragged Christ into the street, laid on His bleeding shoulder a great, heavy cross, and made Him carry it out of the city to the top of a hill called Calvary.

Then they threw the cross on the ground and jerking the clothes from His torn body, laid

Jesus upon it. Whilst some of the soldiers dug a hole in which to stand the cross, others took hammers and long nails and stretching the body of Jesus, nailed His hands and feet to the wood. Then they hoisted the cross and let it drop with a thud into the hole and packed the earth tight about it.

And to two other crosses, they tied two thieves and raised them, one on the left and the other on the right of Christ.

Then they stood off and swore and the crowds surged to and fro and told Jesus that He could save others but could not save Himself, and if He were the Son of God, to come down from the cross and they would believe in Him. But Jesus was dying, because it was His will.

Little by little, the people went back to their homes and whilst a few soldiers stood on guard, Mary, the Mother of Jesus, and Mary Magdalene, the sister of Lazarus, and John, the Apostle, gathered about the cross.

Magdalene threw herself on the ground and wept, and kissed Christ's sacred feet. John stood helpless, and the Blessed Mother watched

and suffered, feeling in her heart all the pain that was her Son's.

And the thief on the left bade Jesus save Himself and them, but the thief on the right told his companion that they, indeed, deserved to die, but not so Christ. Then, turning his head towards Jesus, he said: "Lord, remember me when Thou shalt come into Thy kingdom." (Luke 23:42.) And Jesus answered: "Amen, I say to thee, this day thou shalt be with Me in Paradise." (Verse 43.)

Oh, see how Jesus suffers! The foot of the cross stands in a pool of His precious blood. And Magdalene is covered with it. It is on her hair and on her lips and on her hands and on her dress. It is dripping slowly now from His sacred hands and feet. How white His body is beneath its covering of blood. His dear lips are cracked and dry. His eyes are red and swollen. His poor head throbs with the fiery crown of thorns. His outstretched arms are so tired.

O Jesus, for three long hours Thou hast hung like this! And all for me! Never again will I sin and hurt Thee.

Each minute that Jesus hangs in torture seems



Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying: "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" (Mark 15:34.)

like hours. And now terrible darkness has spread over the earth. You can barely see the faint outline of the white body on the cross. Not a sound breaks the stillness when Jesus raises His weary head, looks through His blood and tears at His dear Mother at His side, and then cries out with all His strength: "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit." (Verse 46.) His head falls lifeless on His breast. He is dead.

CHAPTER XXII

RISEN FROM THE DEAD

When Jesus died on the cross, the earth, in darkness, shook and swayed, rocks burst apart, graves opened, and the dead arose and walked into the city. A Roman soldier seeing these things from near the cross, cried out: "Indeed, this was the Son of God!" (Matt. 27:54.)

But the soul of Jesus went to Limbo where Adam and Eve and Noe and Abraham and David and Daniel, and all who had died loving God, were waiting for Heaven to be opened.

Suddenly a bright light filled the gloomy prison of Limbo as Jesus came among them. They shouted for joy and ran to Him. They listened to the wonderful news He brought. He told them that He was the Son of God, that He had come on earth thirty-three years before to be born a little baby so that when He grew to be a man He could die a frightful death and thus make up for the sins of the world and open Heaven for all. And He told them that in a little while He was going back to Heaven and

would take them with Him to be with Him forever. Oh, how they thanked Him, but they could not understand why He loved them so much.

And late Good Friday afternoon, some of Jesus' friends came to take His sacred body from the cross. When they had drawn out the terrible nails, they carefully took down His body and laid it in Mary's arms. Poor broken-hearted Mother! How she kissed His precious wounds! How her tears fell and how she hated sin when she saw the awful holes in His hands and feet!

They wrapped His body in linens and carried it to a garden near by where they laid it in a grave cut in solid rock. Then they closed the opening with a great stone and went away.

St. John took the Blessed Virgin home with him. There poor Mary Magdalene and some of the other women came. Their hearts were too broken to sleep that night. They went over and over all that had happened during the last few hours. They could see nothing but that torn, bleeding body hanging on the cross. They could hear nothing but the words He spoke—how He prayed for the men who were killing Him, saying: "Father, forgive them, for they know not



And the angel answering, said to the women: "He is not here, for He is risen as He said." (Matt. 28:5, 6).

what they do" (Luke 23:34); how He cried out: "I thirst!" (John 19:28); how He told Mary that John would now be her son; how He told John that Mary would be to him a mother.

Thus the hours passed. They scarcely knew whether it was day or night. But Saturday, the Sabbath, when the sun had set, Mary Magdalene and two other Marys went out and bought sweet spices and perfumes so that early the next morning they might go to the grave and put them on the body of Jesus.

In the meantime the Jewish priests remembered that Jesus had said that the third day after His death He would come back to life. They were afraid that the Apostles would steal away His body and hide it and then tell the people that Jesus was alive; and that when the people had seen that His grave was empty, they would believe the Apostles and believe again in Jesus. So they placed a body of Roman soldiers at the grave to guard it day and night.

And very early Sunday morning, the soul of Christ left Limbo and entered once more His sacred body. Jesus was alive again, and all glo-

rious and beautiful, He passed through the solid rock and left the empty grave. Then an angel came down from Heaven and rolled back the stone. The strong Roman soldiers trembled with fear. They looked into the grave they had guarded so carefully and saw that the body was gone. Then they ran to the priests who had hired them and told what had happened. But they hushed them up with money and bade them say that whilst they were asleep the Apostles came and stole away the body.

That same morning before the sun was up, the three Marys started for the garden. As they walked along, they asked one another how they could ever open the grave, for the stone was too heavy for them to move. But as they entered the garden, they saw to their great surprise that the stone had been rolled away. They were frightened, but went up close enough to the grave to look in. There they saw an angel clothed in white and brighter than the sun, sitting at one end of the grave, but the sacred body was gone. As they were drawing back in fear, the angel spoke to them and said: "Be not affrighted; you seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified:

He is risen, He is not here; behold the place where they laid him." (Mark 16:6.) The women were frightened and yet filled with joy at the angel's words, and ran to tell the Apostles that Jesus was risen from the dead. The Apostles would not believe it, and Peter and John ran to see for themselves. They found the linen cloths and the napkin that had been about His head, but the body was gone, and seeing this, they believed and went home.

Mary Magdalene stayed by the grave, crying, because she thought someone had taken away the body of Jesus and she wanted to find it. Turning around, she saw a Man standing by her who asked: "Woman, why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou?" She, thinking it was the gardener, saith to Him: "Sir, if thou hast taken Him hence, tell me where thou hast laid Him, and I will take Him away." (John 20:15.) He said to her: "Mary!" (Verse 16.)

Then she saw that she had been talking to Jesus and, crying out, "Master!" (verse 16) she fell at His feet.

Jesus spoke to her and then sent her with a message to the others. With her heart beating



And they both ran together, and that other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulchre.
(John 20:4.)

for joy, Mary went and told them that she had seen the Lord.

And late that same day, all the Apostles except Thomas were together in the room where they had made their First Communion. They had the doors and windows locked, for they were afraid that, having killed Christ, the Jews might try to kill them too. All of a sudden, they saw Jesus standing in the middle of the room, and He said to them: "Peace be to you!" (John 20:19.) But they were afraid, for they thought it could not really be Jesus but a spirit, because the doors had not opened and there was no other way to get in.

Then Jesus showed them that it was really He. He told them to come and take hold of Him and feel His body, and He showed them the wounds in His hands and feet where the nails had been and the hole in His side where a soldier had pierced His heart with a lance after He was dead. Then the Apostles believed and were filled with joy.

And Jesus stayed and ate with them, and before He left He said again: "'Peace be to you. As the Father sent Me, I also send you.' When

He had said this, He breathed on them; and He said to them: 'Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained.'" (John 20:21-23.)

The day on which Jesus arose from the grave is called the day of His Resurrection or Easter Sunday.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE END OF THE WORLD

As Jesus died and was buried, so you and I shall some day die and be buried; and as Jesus arose from the dead, so on the Last Day, when the end of the world has come, you and I and every one that has ever lived will rise again from the dead.

On that great day, the angel of God will blow a mighty blast on his trumpet and shout with a voice that shall be heard from one end of the earth to the other: "Arise, ye dead, and come to judgment."

Then all the souls in Heaven and all the souls in hell will enter once more their bodies which God will raise up from the dust into which they have fallen.

The bodies of those whose souls are in sanctifying grace will be made like to the risen body of Christ. They will be glorious and beautiful and will never again know death nor sickness nor disease nor pain nor hunger nor thirst nor sadness nor grief; they will know only joy and glad-

ness and love. And as the risen body of Christ passed through the solid rock of the grave and entered the closed room of the Last Supper, so will their bodies be able to pass through anything, as easily as a ray of sunshine passes through a pane of glass.

But the bodies belonging to the damned souls in hell will rise hideous and deformed and loathsome, and will never again be free from the most dreadful pains.

All, from Adam and Eve to the last child that has been born, will be gathered together in a great valley. Then Jesus will come to judge the world. Then we shall know the thoughts, words and acts of every one that has ever lived. Jesus will call the good to come on His right side and, filled with joy, they will hurry to their places. And He will call the bad to come on His left side and, filled with shame and trembling with fear, they will have to obey.

You and I will be standing there on that great day. To which side will Jesus call us? Oh, we must choose our side now, for then it will be too late. This very moment, let us say that, with Jesus' help, we will stand on His right hand

when He comes to judge the world; and therefore we will now say our morning and night prayers, we will never miss Mass on Sundays, we will be true Catholics as long as we live.

There will be many surprises on that last day. We will say: "Look at little John. How great and strong and beautiful he is! I remember him. He was a little cripple and used to look so pale and thin when they brought him to the window to watch us play. He died so young. I never knew he did anything great."

And Jesus will say: "John was one of my special friends. He tried not to complain and not to grumble, and he offered to Me all his pains and aches. Now he will be forever one of the great ones in the kingdom of Heaven."

"And there is little Annie. She used to be so ugly and no one ever liked her. She was stupid, too, and the teacher used to stand her in the corner. And she always wore such funny clothes. But isn't she beautiful now?"

And Jesus will say: "I loved little Annie, for I could see her heart. Many a time she stopped in church to tell Me that nobody liked her. But I saw how hard Annie tried to please

Me by trying to get her lessons and trying to be kind, though no one was kind to her. She knew that people laughed at her clothes and it hurt her very much, but she used to say: "All for Thee, my Jesus," and try not to mind it. And now I have made Annie so beautiful and will place her high up in My Father's kingdom."

"But just see Richard. What a glorious sight he is! Don't you remember how he was always getting into trouble? Nobody ever thought he would amount to anything."

And Jesus will answer: "Richard had a very rich uncle who wanted him to live with him. And he promised to give him a pony and an automobile and everything he wanted if he would give up being a Catholic. But Richard told his uncle that he would *never* do that. And now he is one of My heroes."

"Who is that great man over there? Why, that is old Gus, the peddler. Do you remember how the boys used to teaze him and pelt him with snow-balls?"

And Jesus will say: "Gus was a great saint. He never cursed nor swore, but all day long kept saying little prayers to Me. And one day he had

a chance to steal a large sum of money and he was very poor and very hungry. But Gus would not steal and now he shall have everything he wants."

"And see the great crowds of priests and sisters! And see how lovingly Jesus looks at them! People used to say that they were foolish to leave their homes and care for the poor and sick instead of having a good time."

And Jesus will say: "They shall be the greatest of all in My Father's kingdom. For they left their father and mother, brothers and sisters, and everything they loved for love of Me."

Then Jesus will turn to the great army on His right hand and say: "Come, ye blessed of My Father, possess you the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." (Matt. 25:34.) No music will ever sound so sweet as these words, and with glad hearts and joyful songs the good will enter Heaven with Jesus to spend in intense happiness the long day of eternity which will never come to an end.

But Jesus will turn to those on His left, and at His glance they will wither with fear and terror and call upon the mountains to fall on

them and upon the sea to swallow them up. Shaking and trembling, they will hear his awful words: "During your life you were ashamed of Me, ashamed to call yourselves Catholics, ashamed to go to confession, ashamed of what your friends would say, ashamed to do right, ashamed to be poor. And now I am ashamed of you! You have had your good time. You rode about in automobiles that you stole the money to buy; you dressed in silks and furs and never did anything for My poor; you filled yourselves with food and drink and never fed My friends who were hungry. 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into everlasting fire which was prepared for the devil and his angels.'" (Matt. 25:41.)

Then, shrieking and howling, the bad will rush into the terrible flames of hell, there to burn through the long night of eternity which will never come to an end.

CHAPTER XXIV

BACK TO HEAVEN

For forty days after His Resurrection, Jesus stayed on earth. He wanted the Apostles to know, without a doubt, that He was truly risen from the dead and He had many things to tell them before going back to Heaven.

When He suddenly stood among the Apostles on Easter Sunday in the room of the Last Supper, Thomas, one of the Twelve, was away. But as soon as the others saw him, they cried out: "We have seen the Lord!" (John 20:25.) Thomas would not believe that Jesus was alive, and said: "Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the place of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe." (John 20:25.)

All that week the Apostles and the holy women came together in the room of the Last Supper and there talked over the wonderful things that had taken place. Mary Magdalene told again how she had seen Jesus first; Peter and John related again how they had run to the grave

Easter morning and found it empty; two of the disciples described once more the walk they had taken Easter afternoon to the little town of Emmaus. They had not yet seen Jesus and they were very sad as they talked over His death. A stranger joining them on the road, asked what they were saying and why they were so sorrowful. And one of them answered: “‘Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things that have been done there in these days?’

“To whom He said: ‘What things?’ And they said: ‘Concerning Jesus of Nazareth . . . and how our chief priests . . . crucified Him?’” (Luke 24: 18-20.) And they told how they had hoped that He was really the Savior of the world, but that now they were losing heart, for the day on which He had promised to come alive again was drawing to a close and they had not yet seen Him.

Then their companion explained to them how all things had happened just as Christ had intended, and He talked so wonderfully and with such wisdom that their hearts were on fire as they listened.

“And they drew nigh to the town, whither they were going; and He made as though He would go farther.” (Luke 24:28.) But they begged Him not leave them, saying: “‘Stay with us, because it is towards evening and the day is now far spent.’ And he went in with them.” (Verse 29.)

And whilst they were at supper, He took bread and blessed it and broke it and gave them Holy Communion. Then their eyes were opened and they knew they had been talking with Jesus all the time, and whilst they held Him in their hearts He disappeared from their sight.

Thus they spent their days in talking about Jesus. Sunday came again and the Apostles were together once more and Thomas was with them. “Jesus cometh, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst and said: ‘Peace be to you.’

“Then He saith to Thomas: ‘Put in thy finger hither and see My hands; and bring hither thy hand and put it into My side; and be not faithless but believing.’

“Thomas answered, and said to Him: ‘My Lord and My God!’



"And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures, the things that were concerning Him."
(Luke 24:27.)

“Jesus saith to him: ‘Because thou hast seen Me, Thomas, thou hast believed: Blessed are they that have not seen, and have believed.’” (John 20:26-29.)

After this, seven of the Apostles were one day at the Sea of Tiberias. Peter said to the others: “‘I go a fishing.’ They say to him: ‘We also come with thee.’ And they went forth and entered into the ship: and that night they caught nothing.

“But when morning was come, Jesus stood on the shore: yet the disciples knew not that it was Jesus.

“Jesus then said to them: ‘Children, have you any meat?’ They answered Him: ‘No.’

“He saith to them: ‘Cast the net on the right side of the ship and you shall find.’ They cast therefore; and now they were not able to draw it, for the multitude of fishes.” (Ch. 21:3-6.)

Seeing this, John knew that it was Jesus that was standing on the shore, and he said to Peter: “It is the Lord!” (Verse 7.)

Then the disciples dragged in the net filled with fishes.

“As soon therefore as they came to land, they

saw hot coals lying and a fish lying thereon, and bread.

“Jesus saith to them: ‘Bring hither of the fishes which you have caught.’

“Simon Peter went up and drew the net to land, full of great fishes, one hundred and fifty three. And although there were so many, the net was not broken.

“Jesus saith to them: ‘Come and dine.’ And none of them who were at meat durst ask Him: ‘Who art Thou?’ knowing that it was the Lord.

“And Jesus cometh and taketh bread and giveth them and fish in like manner.” (Verses 9-13.)

Many, many other things did Jesus with His Apostles until, after being with them for forty days, He led them out of Jerusalem to the top of a hill. Here He spoke to them for the last time. He had said the night before His death that He would have to leave them. This had made them very sad, but He told them that He was going back to His Father in Heaven and that He would there get ready their places and that after they had worked and suffered for a few more years, they would join Him, never

again to be separated from Him. And He told them that when He got to Heaven, He would send them the Holy Ghost to comfort them and guide them and that He would not leave them orphans but would come to them in Holy Communion under the form of bread and wine.

And now, blessing them for the last time, Jesus began to rise slowly into the air. Oh, how they longed to hold Him and keep Him with them! They strained their eyes watching Him rise higher and higher until a cloud hid Him from their sight. Even then they did not turn away, for their hearts had gone with Him beyond this world.

They might have stood thus for hours had not an angel come from Heaven to tell them to go back to Jerusalem and stay there until the Holy Ghost had come. So they went once more to the room of the Last Supper, and there with Mary, the Mother of Jesus, and the other holy women, they spent the days in prayer.

CHAPTER XXV

THE ARMY

“What did Jesus tell the people they must do in order to save their souls and get to Heaven?” He told them that they must enlist in His army, obey His orders, believe His word and be willing to fight. “And did the people enlist in His army?” Many did and others were willing to wear the uniform but were not willing to fight, and so they could not join.

“Has Jesus still got an army?” Yes, He has. “But Jesus is not living on earth now, so how can He have an army?” He has some one to take his place and give orders for Him. “Who is he and where does he live?” His name is Benedict Fifteenth and he lives in Rome, the capital of Christendom. He was once a little boy like one of you, and his name was James, and when he grew up, he became a priest and later a bishop and when the last bishop of Rome died, the officers of Jesus’ army met and voted for James to take the place, and his name was then changed to Benedict, and as there had already

been fourteen bishops of Rome who had taken the name of Benedict, he is called Benedict the Fifteenth.

The priests give orders to the privates, the bishops give orders to the priests and the bishop of Rome gives orders to all the other bishops, and so he is called the *Father* of the whole army or the *Pope*, and his headquarters are always in Rome.

“Can we enlist in Christ’s army, for we want to save our souls, too?” Yes, if you get a uniform. “What is the uniform?” Sanctifying grace. “How can we get it?” By being baptized. “What is baptism?” It is something that washes all sin from our souls and clothes them in the uniform of sanctifying grace. You see, we are all born in original sin, because we are all the children of Adam and Eve. If they had not been deserters and lost their uniforms, we should not have been born deserters either. The whole fight started this way. Everything was happy and peaceful in heaven, when about one third of the angels suddenly rose up against God. And St. Michael and the other good angels, who were the very first soldiers, fought them

and drove them out of Heaven. Then the devil tried to get Adam and Eve to desert God and join his army, and they did and clothed their souls in the devil's uniform, which is sin.

And the devils are still fighting against God with all their might and main, and they cover the whole earth trying to get recruits. And they get many men and women and even little boys and girls to help them in their work, for anyone who tries to get someone else to sin is doing the devil's work.

These are the two great armies in the world — the army of Christ and the army of the devil, and every one on earth is a soldier in one or the other. If we do not fight with Christ, we are fighting against Him; we have to be on one side or the other, there is no third army.

“How is baptism given?” Baptism is given by pouring water on the head of the person to be baptized and saying *at the same time*: “I baptize thee in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.” And the person baptized must promise to have nothing to do with the devil and to fight till death for Christ.

Just as water washes our bodies, so the water of baptism cleanses our soul from sin. It makes us a child of God and gives us a right to Heaven by giving us sanctifying grace. And if a person is grown up when he is baptized, baptism takes away not only original sin but all other sins that he may have on his soul.

“Who can baptize?” Only a priest can baptize unless a person is dying and can not be taken to church and it is not possible to get a priest to come to the house. In this case, anyone can baptize. Even you could baptize by pouring a little water on the person’s head and by saying, whilst pouring the water: “I baptize thee in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.” The person who pours the water must also say the words.

If you know that anyone is dying, find out whether he has been baptized, and if he has not, get a priest. But if there is not time to get a priest, baptize him yourself, if he is willing, no matter how little or how big he is.

Every Sunday afternoon, babies are taken to church to be baptized, but if the baby is sick, one ought not to wait for Sunday.

If you have a little baby in your house, do not let it get to be more than a week or two old before it is baptized. You do not want a deserter in your home but a soldier of Christ. Besides, if anyone dies without being baptized, he can never go to Heaven because he does not belong to the army of Christ. Little babies that die without baptism go to a place called Limbo where they are happy and have everything they want, but where they can never see God.

This is what Jesus taught the people and He told His Apostles to go into the whole world and to baptize everyone, to enlist every one in His army, so that every one may go to Heaven.

Have you been baptized? Have all your brothers and sisters been baptized? If so, you have been enlisted in Christ's great army; you must be proud of your uniform and must fight bravely.

"How can we fight the devil?" By saying your morning and night prayers, by going to Mass on Sunday, by obeying your parents, by not telling lies, by not stealing, by keeping away from all sin. You see it is real hard fighting and you will have to ask Jesus, your Captain, to

make you strong and to help you to win. And oh, how great your reward will be in Heaven!

“And what is the great army of Christ called?”
It is called the Catholic Church.

CHAPTER XXVI

A DEAD SOUL

The angels are so beautiful because they are clothed in sanctifying grace. Indeed, if God should let us see our guardian angel, we could scarcely stand the sight of such brilliance and such splendor. St. John, one of the twelve Apostles, once saw an angel. So glorious was he that he thought he must be God and was going to adore him, when the angel stopped him, saying that he was only one of God's messengers.

So, too, is the beauty of our souls very great when they are in sanctifying grace. If we could only see our souls, we should never want to look at anything else. Suppose that as we walked along the street, God let us see the souls of the persons we met. What a magnificent sight would be the souls of the soldiers in Christ's army! There is nothing on earth like their beauty. Gorgeous flowers, glorious sunsets, deep starry skies, silvery moonlight, snow-capped mountains, rare plumaged birds, precious gems, nothing can compare with it.

“Would the souls of all be clothed in such dazzling beauty?” Alas! no. Only the souls of those who have been baptized. “Of all that have been baptized?” No, again, for many have deserted Christ of their own free will and joined the devil’s army. They have thrown away sanctifying grace and clothed themselves in the uniform of hell. As we neared them, the sight of their dead souls would sicken us so that we should have to run away. It would be pleasanter to handle the body of a leper than pass close to them. And, like lepers, they ought to call out, “Unclean! Unclean!” to warn those in sanctifying grace to keep away, for, like lepers, they will likely cause death to the souls of those who go with them.

“But how can anyone kill his soul?” By committing big, deadly sins that we call mortal sins. “And can our souls really die?” No, our souls can never die, but we call a soul in mortal sin a dead soul, because it can do nothing to please God; it can never live in Heaven, unless it gets back sanctifying grace. It is far better to die than to commit a mortal sin, and no one on earth, not even all the devils in hell, can make

us commit a mortal sin against our will. Thousands of men and women and little boys and girls have faced death rather than commit a mortal sin. But they prayed to Christ and He gave them strength, and we must pray to Christ and ask Him every day to let us die before we commit a mortal sin.

It was mortal sin that nailed Jesus to the cross.

Many, many sins are not as big as mortal sins, and we call them venial sins. Some venial sins are bigger than others, but they are all very bad, even though they do not take away sanctifying grace and do not kill the soul.

It is a venial sin to disobey our parents, to say mean things about other boys and girls, to steal pennies or apples or cakes, to tell lies, to lose our temper, etc.

Venial sins spot and stain our souls, even though they can not take away sanctifying grace as mortal sins do.

Oh, be careful of your uniforms! Keep them spotless, and if you do commit a sin, tell our Lord that you are very sorry and ask Him to forgive you and take the ugly stain away. Don't play with anyone who gets you to sin, and be very

careful not to lead anyone else into sin. Keep your thoughts nice, throw all other thoughts out; watch your words and don't do anything you would be ashamed to have your angel see you do. There are some things we ought to close our eyes to; there are some things we ought to close our ears to; there are some things we ought to close our lips to; there are some things we ought to close our thoughts to.

There once lived a great king. He was king of France and his name was Louis IX. When he was a little boy, the queen, his mother, told him that she loved him very dearly, but that she would rather see him dead at her feet than have a mortal sin on his soul. And Louis never forgot his mother's words, and he made up his mind that he would die rather than commit a mortal sin. And when he grew to be a man and sat on the throne and when he led the armies of France to battle, he always took the greatest care to keep his uniform of sanctifying grace bright and clean. And all the people loved him and he was so good that he will always be called St. Louis of France.

Henry was the name of a little boy who didn't

want to ever commit a mortal sin. When he made his First Communion he wore a little white necktie and he told his mother that he would always wear a white tie as long as he kept his soul clean from mortal sin. When Henry grew to be a man, he went to fight for his country, and was badly wounded. As he lay dying on the field, a friend of his knelt by him ready to carry his last message to his mother. And Henry took a little white tie and said: "Give this to my mother and tell her that I wore it till the end."

Oh, if we want to keep away from mortal sins, we must fight against our venial sins. What is the sin we commit most often? Is it telling lies or stealing or swearing or saying mean things about others? If it is telling lies, what makes us tell them? Is it to throw blame on someone else and to keep ourselves out of trouble? To get away from scolding or some other punishment? If this is so, then we lie because we are afraid to tell the truth, and anyone who is afraid to do what is right is a coward.

Every lie you tell spots your soul and you do not really get out of trouble, you only put the

trouble off, for God has to punish every sin we commit, either before we die or after.

Don't be a coward. Tell the truth and take the punishment, no matter how hard it may be.

If at school the teacher says: "Did you spill that ink?" or "Did you throw that paper ball?" don't be a coward, say "Yes."

Some boys and girls cheat in school. They copy other children's papers. But the teacher soon learns who they are and she never likes them. Stand on your own feet and if you fail, fail honestly.

If at home your mother says, "Did you take that sugar?" or "Did you break this cup?" don't be a coward, say "Yes."

When you say your prayers at night, count the number of lies you have told during the day; ask our Lord to please forgive you and try to make the number less next day. Fight against lying and in a month you will kill it, but watch out that it does not come alive again. Then take your next worst sin and fight it.

CHAPTER XXVII

THE FIRE THAT NEVER BURNS OUT

Nothing on earth is so horrible as a dead soul. God turns His face from it and His angels flee from it. If ever you should be so unhappy as to commit a mortal sin, don't go around with a dead soul within you, but tell a priest as soon as you can, for he can take away our sins and give back sanctifying grace.

It is a terrible thing to live with a dead soul, and it is still more terrible to die with a dead soul, for then the soul will be buried forever in hell.

Think of being locked up in a jail with thousands and thousands of devils and thousands and thousands of the worst men and women and children that have ever lived, all shrieking and cursing God through an endless night. And suppose the prison were made of red-hot iron and filled with roaring flames so that there was not a place on which you could lie or a spot on which you could stand without being terribly burned. And flames would shoot into your

mouth and out through your ears and eyes and run through your veins and wrap you round like a cloak. And you would scream with pain and beat against the red-hot walls and beg to die and ask, "How long must this last?" And the answer would come back: "Forever. It will never, never end." Ah! this is nothing to what hell really is!

Suppose you were told to sit in a comfortable chair in a beautiful room, surrounded by toys and games and picture-books. You could have everything you wanted, only you could never leave your chair, and just one of your hands would be buried day and night in red-hot coals, and yet could never burn up. If this were the punishment for mortal sin, do you think you would ever commit one?

Do you think you could plunge your hand for one minute in a burning fire? Could you hold it there for ten minutes, for one hour, for one day? Then how could you stand hell forever? Hell is the punishment for one mortal sin.

Oh, isn't it better to be poor and lose our friends and have people laugh at us and even die than to commit a mortal sin?

At this very moment there are people burning in hell. Ask them why they are there and they will tell you it is through their own fault. Ask them what they would do if they could have one more chance, and they will tell you that they would die a thousand deaths rather than ever again commit a mortal sin.

But will they ever have another chance? Never. The gates of hell open only from the outside. Once within, it is impossible to get out.

CHAPTER XXVIII

IN PRISON

There is a prison of fire in which the sick and wounded of Christ's army are held for a time.

The instant we die, we stand before our Lord to be judged. Every thought, every word, every act of our whole life will be laid bare. If our souls are in mortal sin, we shall be cast into hell forever; if our souls are in sanctifying grace, we shall live in Heaven forever. But we may not go to Heaven at once, for only those whose souls are spotless can enter there. And if we have venial sins on our souls and if we have not made up for all our sins that have been forgiven, we shall enter, for a time, the prison of fire called Purgatory, there to suffer until all stains are burned away and we are fit to live with Jesus in His Father's House. Then our angel will come for us and, lifting us out of the terrible flames, will carry us to Heaven and for the first time we shall see God face to face!

The sufferings in Purgatory are very great, and yet the souls there know that it will only last

for a time (Purgatory itself will end with the world), and they love God with all their strength.

We can help the poor souls in Purgatory by offering our prayers and sufferings for them. They can do nothing for themselves, but they can do a great deal for us and they will never forget us if we shorten their stay in the fiery prison. Often during the day say, "My Jesus, mercy!" for the soul of some one you know that has died or for some poor soul that has no one to pray for it. And when you want some favor from God, pray to the poor souls to get it for you.

And we can say little prayers for ourselves, too, to make up for our own sins so that we shall not have to stay so long in Purgatory when we die.

We must make up for every sin we commit, no matter how small, either here before we die or in Purgatory after we die. If, every time we go to commit a sin, we stop and think, "I must burn for this," we shall not commit nearly as many as we do.

At this moment persons are burning for lies they told so easily, for little things they stole, for mean things they said.

Be very careful not to take anything that does not belong to you. Never touch so much as a penny that is not yours. If you borrow anything, even a pencil or an eraser, take care to give it back. Some boys and girls do not care how they hurt what belongs to someone else. This is not right and we ought to be just as careful of what belongs to others as we are of what belongs to ourselves.

Boys and girls that are truthful and that can be trusted never to touch what is not theirs are the boys and girls that God loves and that every one else loves, too.

Another sin you must guard against is saying mean things, things you would not like to have said about yourself. Don't carry tales. And if others talk unkindly of someone, stand up for him and take his part. There are some boys and girls about whom people say: "You can not get them to say a mean thing about anyone and they will not let anyone else say anything mean, either." Wouldn't it be fine if our Lord could say that about you?

Be friends with every one. If you do not want to go with a certain child, you do not have to,

but at least speak when you meet, unless, for some good reason, you have been told not to do so.

CHAPTER XXIX

WHITER THAN SNOW

No matter how dirty you get playing and romping about, if you get into a tub of good hot water and use plenty of soap, you will be perfectly clean. And no matter how black or stained your soul is, if you bathe it in the precious Blood of Jesus, it will be made whiter than snow. Jesus died on the cross, so that you and I might wash our souls when soiled by sin. Oh, how good it is to know that we can get rid of our sins and that even if our souls are dead, they can be brought back to life!

“I have many sins on my soul, but I’d give anything to get them off. If my soul could be made white as snow, I’d try very hard to keep it so. But how can I wash my soul in Jesus’ precious Blood?”

I’ll tell you how. Suppose I should take you to church and open a door and there you would see our Lord with a smile on His sacred face and His arms stretched out to receive you. And you could climb on to His lap and throw your

arms about His neck and whisper into His ear every bad thought, every bad word, and every bad thing you have ever done. You would not be afraid to tell your sins, for our Lord knows them anyway. Then Jesus would ask you to say that you were sorry and that you were going to try very hard to be good, and whilst you were telling Him so, He would wash away your sins in His own precious Blood and you would come back into the church with your angel's wings close about you, with your soul whiter than snow, with your heart bursting with joy.

This is what we call going to confession and this is what you would do if Jesus were still living on earth as He once did. But now He has His priests all over the world to take His place and when we tell them our sins, Jesus listens, and when they take away our sins, Jesus takes them away.

I will take you to church and show you a confessional which is the place where people go to confession. I will open the door and show you where the priest sits and I will pull back a curtain at one side and show you where you can kneel and I will show you the little grating

through which you can whisper your sins into the ear of the priest.

And now I will tell you how to make a good confession. Kneel down near a confessional, make the sign of the cross and ask Jesus to help you to remember your sins, to be sorry for them and to tell them all. Then think: How many lies have I told? If I can't count them, about how many do I tell in a day? Besides telling each sin, I must say how often I have committed it.

Have I stolen things to eat, at home or away from home? Have I stolen money? How much? How often? Have I stolen anything else?

Have I been disobedient to my parents? Have I been rude to them?

Do I say my morning and night prayers? Do I go to Mass on Sunday?

Do I get angry?

Have I sworn? Have I said bad words? Have I had bad thoughts and liked them and kept them on purpose? If I tried to put them out of my mind, there was no sin. (Whenever a bad thought comes to your mind, put it out and say: "My Jesus, help me!")

Is there anything else I have done that was wrong? Anything bad that I am ashamed to tell? Anything that worries me and that I do not know how to tell?

Don't be afraid to tell the priest everything. If you stayed up all night, you could not possibly think of a sin he has not already heard. The priest does not care what you say; all he wants is to take away your sins. He can't tell anyone what you tell him. To whisper to him is like whispering into a hole in the ground. But he thinks a great deal of a girl or a boy that comes right out bravely with his worst sins.

If you are ashamed to tell some of your sins or do not know how to tell them, just say to the priest: "Father, I have some sins that I don't know how to tell."

The priest can not hurt you, he can not touch you, and if you get frightened, you can walk out and he will not come after you. But the best thing to do, if you are afraid, is just to say: "Father, I am afraid."

Never go to confession unless you are willing to tell all your sins. Of course, we only have to tell mortal sins and we can leave out our venial

sins if we want to. If we left out a mortal sin knowingly, our confession would be bad. It would be much better not to go to confession or, if inside, to walk out, if there is a mortal sin we are not going to tell. Anyone who makes a bad confession must tell all his sins over again the next time he goes to confession, and must say that his last confession was bad, for that is another sin. It is very wrong and very foolish to make a bad confession. If we get frightened or ashamed, we need only say so to the priest; or, if we will not do that, we can say: "Father, I'll come another time"; or, say nothing and leave.

If you forget to tell any mortal sins, they will be forgiven, but if you remember them the next time you go to confession, you must tell them and say you forgot to tell them before.

The best way is to tell not only all your mortal sins, if you have any, but also your venial sins, for you want them, too, washed away.

When you have thought over your sins, think for a moment of the terrible suffering of hell and how glad the souls there would be to tell all their sins if they had your chance. Then tell our Lord

that you will never offend Him again, for you are afraid of hell. Then think of Heaven, where you will surely go if you keep away from sin. Then look at the crucifix and see how Jesus suffered and died on account of your sins. Tell Him that you love Him and that you will try never again to hurt Him by sin. Then say slowly the Act of Contrition. Our confession is no good unless we are sorry for our sins and make up our mind to try not to sin again.

After this you can go into the confessional and when the priest opens the slide, make the sign of the cross and say: "Bless me, Father, for I have sinned. This is my first confession." Then forget all about the priest and just think that Jesus has His arms around you and is listening to all you say. Tell your sins just as you know them and say how many times you have done them. If you like, close your eyes.

When you have finished, the priest will tell you to say some prayer. This is called the penance and you should say it after you leave the confessional.

When you have heard what your penance is (if you do not understand what it is, ask), say

the Act of Contrition slowly and carefully and whilst you do so, the priest takes away all your sins and the precious Blood of Jesus washes your soul whiter than snow.

When the priest closes the slide, go back into the church, say your penance and stay a little while to pray, to thank our Lord for taking away your sins and to ask Him and His blessed Mother to keep you pure.

You never have to tell the same sin more than once in a good confession. The next time you go to confession and have said, "Bless me, Father, for I have sinned," say how long it is since your last confession, and then tell only the sins you have committed since your last confession. If ever you find you have not much to tell, finish by saying that in your past life, or long ago, you committed such and such a sin, telling one or two past sins over again for which you know you are sorry.

CHAPTER XXX

THE GUEST FROM HEAVEN

You remember that Jesus said that although He was leaving this world and was going back to His Father's House in Heaven, He would not leave us orphans but would come to us. That same night, the night before He died, He told His Apostles how to call Him from Heaven and how, at their bidding, He would come and be the Guest of their hearts. For when the Last Supper was over, taking bread, He blessed it and broke it and gave it to them, saying: "Take ye and eat. This is My Body." (Matt. 26:26.) And taking the cup of wine, He blessed it and gave it to them, saying: "Drink ye all of this. For this is My Blood." (Verses 27, 28.) And the Apostles ate the sacred Body of Christ and drank His precious Blood, and Jesus told them that they, too, by doing just as He had done, should change bread into His Body and wine into His Blood.

And ever since that night, the priests of Jesus' Church change bread into His Body and wine

into His Blood. Each day, each priest throughout the world obeys Christ's dying wish and, in the Mass, does once more what Jesus did on that sad night in which He was betrayed.

In the Mass, the priest offers to God, on a little gold plate, a round piece of unleavened bread such as Jesus used, and, in a gold cup, wine mixed with water.

In the middle of the Mass, the priest takes the bread in his hands, blesses it and says, as Jesus did: "This is My Body." At once Christ steps from Heaven and places Himself in the priest's fingers where, an instant before, had been a piece of bread. The priest looks at the round, white host and though his eyes can see no change, he knows he holds the Body of Christ and, first kneeling to adore our Lord whom he has called from Heaven, he raises high above his head the sacred host that we too may look and cry as Thomas did: "My Lord and my God!" (John 20:28.)

Then blessing the cup of wine, the priest says, as Jesus did: "This is My Blood." At once the wine is changed into the Blood of Christ and though the priest's eyes can see no change, he kneels to adore and then raises the cup that we,



I will come to you. (John 14:18.)

too, may look at it, knowing it holds the Blood that washes away our sins.

Towards the end of the Mass, the priest eats the sacred Body of Christ and drinks His precious Blood.

In the sacred host, the whole of Jesus is present—His Body, His Blood, His Soul and His divinity and not His Body alone; and in the cup, under what looks like wine, the whole of Jesus is present, His Body, His Blood, His Soul and His divinity, and not His Blood alone.

And then the cloth is spread, people go to the railing, the priest comes down from the altar, and places on each person's tongue, a sacred host which is Jesus Himself, His Body, His Blood, His Soul, His divinity. Then each one goes back to his place, carrying in his heart his heavenly Guest.

And soon you, too, will be able to go to the railing and receive on your tongue, from the hands of the priest, the same Jesus who once came to earth on Christmas night and once died on a cross, all for you. Then carefully swallowing the sacred host, you will carry the dear Christ within you, back to your seat and there,

kneeling with bowed head and closed eyes, love Him with all your heart. With your face in your hands, it will be easy to think that Jesus is sitting down and that you are kneeling at His feet with your face buried in His lap. Feel His hand resting on your head and stay like this as long as you can. When you get tired, look up into His beautiful face and talk to Him. Thank Him for coming clear from Heaven to be your Guest, thank Him for making you a soldier in His army and for washing away all your sins in His Blood, thank Him for the wonderful place He has ready for you in His Father's House. Ask Him to let you die before you commit a mortal sin, ask Him to make you a good Catholic and to bless your father, mother, brothers, sisters and friends. Tell Him what you would like to be when you grow up; tell Him your worst sin and ask Him to help you to kill it; tell Him about something you will try to do to please Him before His next visit. When you can think of nothing else, read your prayer-book or say some little prayers until you have stayed five or ten minutes after Mass is over.

To receive Holy Communion, you must not

have a single mortal sin on your soul and you must take nothing to eat or drink after twelve o'clock the night before. If you should forget and take a drink or a bite to eat, you could not receive Holy Communion that day.

If you should have only venial sins on your soul, you could receive Holy Communion, but in that case, first make a good act of Contrition. And of course we ought to try to have our souls without a spot so that when Jesus comes, He will see nothing that will make Him feel badly.

And when we are sick, if we send word to the priest, he will carry our Lord to us and let us receive Him in Holy Communion.

When you have made your First Communion, ask the priest how often you can go to Holy Communion and then try to go as often as he will let you.

The greatest thing we can do is to receive Jesus and the greatest moments of our lives are when we hold Him in our hearts. If we receive Him often all through life and receive Him carefully, He will keep many dangers away from us and will make us more and more like

Himself, gentle and kind and obedient and truthful. And then, when we die and go to visit Him, what a welcome He will give us!

CHAPTER XXXI

WHERE WE CAN FIND HIM

“Where does Jesus live?” With His Father in Heaven. “And has He no home on this earth?” Yes, every Catholic Church, from North to South, from East to West, is His home. “But I do not see Him when I go to church.” I will tell you where He is. Have you ever noticed a little door in the center of the high altar? Behind that little door Jesus lives and He only comes out to go to the people in Holy Communion or to let the priest place Him in the centre of a large gold vessel for Benediction.

Only the priest can open that little door and, when he does, this is what he sees: a large gold cup with a cover, holding a number of sacred hosts, in each one of which Jesus is present. Those are the sacred hosts the people will receive in Holy Communion. “But when they are all gone, what will the priest do?” He will fill the gold cup with little round pieces of bread and when he says Mass, he will change each one into the Body and Blood of Christ. “And what

else is behind the little door?" A little gold or silver case in which Jesus is present in one large sacred host. This sacred host the priest uses for Benediction.

"And what does Jesus do all day behind that little door?" He waits for you and me to come and call on Him. Oh, every day run over to the nearest church to visit Him. Get as near to Him as you can. Kneel at the railing and with your eyes on that little door, stay a few minutes with Him.

We need never be lonesome, wherever we travel through the wide, wide world, for we shall always find Jesus waiting for us behind the little door. The tiny flame of the lamp that hangs before the altar, says: "Jesus is at home." If ever the little light is out, for some reason, Jesus is not there.

Whenever Catholics pass Jesus' home, the church, men and boys take off their hats and women and girls bow their heads.

Whenever, in traveling, you come to a village or a city, bow to Jesus, for He is somewhere there in His altar-home. And if you should move to another town or visit there, find out at once

where the Catholic church is that you may go and call on Christ.

For the Catholic Church is His Church. It is the Church He made when He lived on earth and so He stays with it.

CHAPTER XXXII

TONGUES OF FIRE

After Jesus had gone to Heaven, the Apostles stayed in the room of the Last Supper, praying and waiting for the Holy Ghost. At last on the tenth day, "suddenly there came a sound from Heaven, as of a mighty wind coming, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting" (Acts 2:2). And there rested over the head of each a tongue of fire. "And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost" (verse 4).

From that moment they were changed. They no longer hid behind barred doors, but rushed out into the streets and told every one that they were the friends of Jesus of Nazareth.

And a great light shone in on their minds and they remembered everything Jesus had said to them and they understood it all for the first time. Now there were in Jerusalem, Jews who had come from every country in the world, and when they had gathered in a great crowd to hear the Apostles, each one heard his own language. They could not understand how this could be

and they asked one another what it meant. But the Holy Ghost had given the Apostles this power.

Then Peter stood up and told them that they had crucified Christ, the Son of God. And many of the Jews felt very sorry and said: "What shall we do?" (verse 37). And Peter said: "Be baptized every one of you" (verse 38). And about three thousand were baptized.

Every day more and more were baptized and joined the army of Christ, which is the Catholic Church. The rich sold everything they owned and divided it with the poor and they all lived together, and what one had, the other had.

One day Peter and John went up to the temple. At the Gate Beautiful, a beggar was sitting. He had been lame all his life and was now over forty years old. Every day he was carried to the gate so that he could beg from the people that passed.

When he had seen Peter and John about to go into the temple, he asked them for help.

"But Peter said: 'Gold and silver I have none; but what I have, I give thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, arise and walk.'

“And taking him by the right hand, he lifted him up. . . .

“And he leaping up, stood and walked, and went in with them into the temple. . . .

“And all the people saw him walking and praising God.

“And they knew him, that it was he who sat begging alms at the Beautiful Gate of the temple: and they were filled with wonder and amazement at that which had happened to him” (Acts 3:6-10).

And a crowd quickly gathering, Peter spoke to them and said that he had not cured the man by his own power, but through the holy name of Jesus. And then he told them that the Christ they had killed was the Son of God, and that although they had not known what they were doing, they should be very sorry for their sin. And many of the Jews believed and asked to be baptized.

But the Jewish priests were frantic and whilst Peter and John were still speaking, they had them seized and thrown into jail, for it was then evening.

The next day, the high-priest and all his rela-

tives and the priests and the rulers came together, and Peter and John were brought before them. And they asked them: "By what power, or by what name, have you done this?" (Acts 4:7.)

Then Peter answered: "Be it known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God hath raised from the dead, even by Him this man standeth here before you whole.

"For there is no other Name under heaven given to men, whereby we must be saved." (Verses 10, 12.)

The priests did not know what to do. If they punished the Apostles, the people would not like it, for they knew that Peter had cured the beggar. And so they only threatened them and told them never again to speak about Jesus.

But the Apostles kept right on preaching and the people for miles around brought their sick and laid them on beds in the street so that when Peter passed, his shadow at least might fall on them and cure them. And they were all made well.

The priests grew so angry and jealous, that at

last they threw the Apostles into prison. But at night an angel came and opened the doors and led them out. And in the morning they were back in the temple preaching.

And when the priests sent to the prison for the Apostles, the doors were found locked and the guards on duty, but the prison was empty. Whilst they were wondering how this could be, some one came and said: "The men whom you put in prison, are in the temple standing, and teaching the people" (Acts 5:25). Then they sent for the Apostles and after having them whipped, forbade their speaking again about Jesus. But they went away very happy, because they had suffered something for Christ.

More and more men and women joined the Catholic Church and among them was a man named Stephen, who went about preaching and curing the sick. And the Jews seized him and took him outside the city and there hurled heavy stones upon him. And Stephen's face was beautiful as the face of an angel and he cried out: "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit" (Acts 7:58). And falling on his knees and praying for the men that were killing him, he died.

St. Stephen was the first martyr or the first person in the whole world to give up his life for the love of Jesus.

Among those who stood by at Stephen's death, was a young Jew named Saul. He hated the Catholics and went about as a spy from city to city, hunting them out and dragging them to court. One day, as he was after the Christians, he was thrown off his horse, and a bright light shone upon him and he was immediately struck blind. Then he heard the voice of Jesus speaking to him and telling him that the Catholic Church was His Church, and that in going against it, he was going against God. Now Saul had really thought that he was working for God and when he heard this, he was baptized and joined the Church and the Apostles made him a priest and a bishop. Saul's name was changed to Paul, and he spent the rest of his life working with all his might and main to get men to believe in Jesus. He traveled in many countries and suffered many things and at last he went to Rome. St. Peter went to Rome, too, and was its first bishop. As Jesus had made him the head of all the other Apostles, he was the *father* of all,



And there appeared to them parted tongues as it were of fire, and it sat upon every one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost. (Acts 2:3, 4.)

or the first *pope*. He and St. Paul did all they could to teach the Romans, who were pagans and did not even believe in God. But at last the people killed them both, on the same day, for preaching about Jesus of Nazareth. They cut St. Paul's head off and they hung St. Peter to a cross. And when St. Peter saw the cross on which he was to die, he wept to think how Jesus had died upon the cross for him. And then he said that he was not good enough to die as his dear Master had and so they crucified him with his head down towards the ground.

Each of the Apostles, after preaching in different parts of the world, was put to death—all but St. John. He was thrown into a great cauldron of boiling oil, but when they took him out, he was alive and well, and not so much as burned. Then they sent him off to an island in the sea and there he died when a very old man.

And you and I belong to the same great Church that Jesus made and for which the glorious Apostles died. And since their time, millions of men and women and even little boys and girls have let themselves be killed, because they would not leave the Church that Jesus made.

Even now, in far away parts of the world, Catholics are being put to death, because they love Jesus of Nazareth. But here, where you live, no one will kill you because you are a Catholic, but they will try to do many other things to you. They will make fun of you and tell lies about you and coax you to go to their Sunday Schools and even promise to give you ice-cream and automobile rides and nice clothes, if you will go to their church. But you must be strong and firm and remember that Jesus made only one Church, and that all the other churches were made long afterwards by different men that did not want to do what Jesus said; and you must think of the Apostles and the millions of other martyrs and you must be ready to die like them rather than give up your Church and you must be very proud that you are a Catholic and a soldier in Christ's army.

The Holy Ghost will make you brave when He comes to you as He did to the Apostles. And when will the Holy Ghost come to you? When the bishop confirms you. Some day, when you have learned enough, you will go to church and there the bishop will pray to the Holy Ghost to

come. Just as when you go to Holy Communion, so when you are confirmed you must not have any mortal sin on your soul. And you will walk up to the bishop and he will make the Sign of the Cross on your forehead with holy chrism and say: "I sign thee with the Sign of the Cross and I confirm thee with the chrism of salvation, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." And the priest will wipe the chrism off, but a mark, showing you are a full soldier of Christ, will go on your soul and never come off.

And the bishop will give you a slight blow on the cheek to remind you that it will sometimes be very hard to be good and you will have to suffer but that you must be strong and brave. And you can be these for you will have received the Holy Ghost. He will be within your soul and when you go back to your place in the church, you must speak to Him and beg Him never to leave you, to let you see clearly that saving your soul is the big business of life, and to set your heart on fire with love for God.

